

Ornia
al

ex libris Blanche Morse-



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

FROM THE LIBRARY
OF

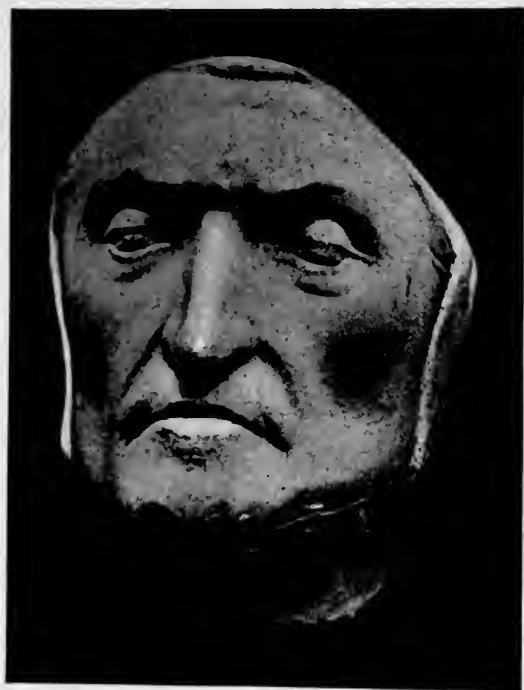
ELI SOBEL

THE PRINCE

OF THE

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE DIVINE COMEDY
PURGATORY



MASK OF DANTE.

Alinari

DANTE ALIGHIERI

THE
DIVINE COMEDY

TRANSLATED BY

C. E. WHEELER



VOLUME TWO
PURGATORY

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.

NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

MCMXI

All rights reserved

PQ

4315

W56

1911

v. 2

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE been enabled to increase the value of this attempt to render the *Divine Comedy* into English, by the addition of the arguments and notes from the Temple Edition. I owe this great privilege to the kindness of the distinguished editor of that edition, the Rev. Philip Wicksteed, who extends his sympathy to all attempts to do honour to Dante. The arguments and the longer notes are from his own pen; the latter are signed with his initials. The notes to the text are taken from those prepared for the Temple Edition by Dr. Oelsner with only such modifications as were necessary to adapt notes to the Italian original into notes to a particular translation. The editor of the Temple Edition is in no way responsible for any of this translation: he has only allowed me to reinforce its shortcomings with his most admirable expositions and explanations, and I desire to express here my gratitude for his kindness. My debt to his edition, however, does not end here. Its prose translations (by Mr. Carlyle, Mr. T. Okey, and Mr. Wicksteed himself) have been my court of appeal whenever I was in doubt, and have enabled me better to conceal the limitations of

my Dante scholarship. Of the many instances where my translation coincides with that given in the Temple Edition, about two-thirds are cases wherein (to the best of my belief) I have independently reached the same rendering. The remaining third are cases wherein I deliberately adopted the Temple version, as being superior to any form of words which had occurred to me, and I make here my most grateful acknowledgment of the help which it has given to me.

THE PURGATORY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI

CANTO I

PROLOGUE

THE poets issue on the low-lying shore east of the Mount of Purgatory, and Dante's eyes, which in Hell have shared the misery of his heart, become once more the instruments of delight, as he looks into the clear blue sky and sees Venus near the eastern horizon. The South Pole of the Heavens is well above the southern horizon, and all is bathed in the light of the glorious constellation never seen since man, at the Fall, was banished to the Northern Hemisphere. Turning north, the poet perceives the venerable figure of Cato, his face illuminated by the four stars, typifying the four moral virtues. He challenges the poets as though fugitives from Hell; but Virgil pleads the command of a Lady of Heaven, and explains that Dante still lives, and is seeking that liberty for love of which Cato himself had renounced his life. He further appeals to him, by his love of Marcia, to further their journey through his realm. Cato is untouched by the thought of Marcia, from whom he is now inwardly severed; but in reverence for the heavenly mandate he bids Virgil gird Dante with the rush of humility and cleanse his face with dew from the stains of Hell, that he may be ready to meet the ministers of Heaven. The sun, now rising, will teach them the ascent. The poets seek the shore, as the sea ripples under the morning breeze; and Virgil follows Cato's behest, cleansing Dante's face with dew, and plucking the rush, which instantly springs up again miraculously renewed.

Henceforth the little vessel of my mind
To glide o'er better waters hoists the sail,
And all the cruel seas she leaves behind:

Now of the second kingdom tells my tale, 4
Wherein the human soul is purged of stain
That to ascend to Heav'n it may avail.

Here let dead Poetry arise again, 7
O holy Muses, since I am your own,
And may Calliope revive the strain,

(Accompanying my song,) which once beat down 10
The wretched magpies, till in shame they knew
That past all pardon their offence had grown.

The Oriental sapphire's gentle hue, 13
Which made the peaceful aspect of the sky
To the first circle's height, grow clear and blue,

Restored all happiness unto mine eye, 16
Soon as I issued forth from that dead air,
That breast and eyes had saddened equally.

She who gives strength to Love, the Planet fair, 19
With smiles made all the Eastern heaven kind,
Veiling the Fishes that her escort were.

I turned to my right hand and set my mind 22
On the other pole, and stars I noted, four,
That none save our first parents e'er could find.

CANTO I

3

All Heaven seemed as though rejoicing o'er 25
Their flames. O Northern lands, how widowed ye
That now can gaze upon them nevermore!

When of their worth I sought no more to see, 28
And somewhat tow'rd the other pole I turned,
Whence now the Wain had vanished utterly,

An aged man close by me I discerned; 31
For such great reverence his mien did call
As never son for any father learned.

Long was his beard and streaked with white withal,
Like to the aspect of the locks of hair 35
That to his breast in two-fold list did fall.

The rays of those four holy lamps made fair 37
His face, with such a brilliancy of light
I saw him, as the Sun before him were.

"Who are ye, who against the dark stream's might,"
(His reverent plumes he moved and thus he said,) 41
"From the eternal prison thus take flight?"

"Who guided you? What lamp was it that led 43
"You issuing forth from out the night profound,
"Whose blackness o'er the infernal vale is shed?"

"Are then the laws of the abyss unbound, 46
"Or is from Heaven some new counsel sent,
"That damned, ye still can enter on my ground?"

- Then did my leader, on my welfare bent, 49
With words and hands and signs lay hold on me
Till knees and brow he had made reverent.
- “ I came not of myself,” then answered he, 52
“ A lady came from Heav’n and at her prayer
“ This man I aided with my company:
- “ But since it is thy will that I declare 55
“ More of our state, that truth established stay,
“ It cannot be my will to thwart thee there.
- “ He has not looked upon his life’s last day, 58
“ But through his folly was so near it led,
“ Short time indeed there was to turn away.
- “ Then was I sent to him, as I have said, 61
“ To rescue him, nor is a pathway known
“ Other than this on which my foot has sped.
- “ To him the guilty nations I have shown, 64
“ And now those spirits would display who dwell
“ Beneath thy wardship, and for sin atone.
- “ How I have brought him were too long to tell: 67
“ Virtue from high gives aid, that thus through me
“ He may both see thee and may hear thee well.
- “ Let now his coming be found sweet to thee: 70
“ Freedom he seeketh, and how she is dear,
“ He knows, who gives up life for liberty.

CANTO I

5

" Thou knowest; Death no bitterness did wear 73
" In Utica, when the robe was laid aside
" Which on the great Day shall shine bright and clear.

" Nor are for us eternal laws denied, 76
" For this man lives and Minos binds not me.
" But where I dwell do the chaste eyes abide

" Of Marcia, who, in thy memory 79
" To live, O Holy heart, doth ever pray.
" For her love's sake bend to us presently;

" Throughout thy seven kingdoms grant us way, 82
" And if thou deign to be remembered there,
" Then thanks of thee to her will I repay."

" Marcia to mine eyes was found so fair." 85
Then he began—" While yonder life was good,
" I gave with joy what grace she willed soe'er;

" Now that she dwells beyond the evil flood, 88
" She cannot move me more, by that law's force
" That when I issued thence established stood.

" But if a heavenly lady guide thy course 91
" E'en as thou say'st, for flattery what need?
" To ask in her name is the best resource.

" Go then and see that with a fair smooth reed 94
" Thou gird this man; from every stain that lies
" Upon his countenance, cleanse him with heed:

" It is not meet that with mist-darkened eyes, 97
" He should attempt that minister to face,
" The first that is of them of Paradise.

" This little island all around its base, 100
" Yonder where beat the sea waves without end,
" Bears rushes where the soft mud yields a space.

" No other plant could live, which forth doth send 103
" Leaves, or in which a hardened stem doth grow,
" Since 'neath the buffeting it would not bend.

" Returning, shun this path by which ye go, 106
" And where the easiest ascent is made
" The Sun, now rising, will most clearly show."

With this he vanished: then no word I said, 109
But rose and to my leader back I went
And steadfastly mine eyes on him I stayed.

He said: " Son, follow where my steps are bent; 112
" Let us turn back, the plain slopes downward there
" Until in its low bounds it all is spent."

The dawn was vanquishing the morning air 115
That fled before it: so of the trembling main,
Even from far away I grew aware.

We traversed all the solitary plain 118
As one who seeks a path once lost, anew,
And till he reach it seems to go in vain.

When we were come there where the morning dew
Strives with the Sun, because our pathway led 122
Where slow it vanished, while a fresh wind blew;

Then both his hands upon the grass outspread 124
My master gently laid and tenderly:
Straight knew I what should be accomplishèd.

Tow'rd him I turned the tear-stained cheeks of me; 127
Then he brought back their colour which before,
Hell had concealed with shade of misery.

Now were we come unto that desert shore 130
Upon whose waters whosoe'er is found
To sail, returns unto his home no more.

Then as another willed, he girt me round; 133
And as he plucked, O! marvel wonder worth,
The humble plant, re-springing whole and sound,

There, whence he tore it, found a second birth. 136

CANTO II

AT Jerusalem day is setting and night rising, and in Purgatory day rising and night setting; and as the poets, pondering on their course, are delaying their journey against their will, they see glowing red in the east a light swiftly approaching them; which Virgil soon recognises as Charon's angelic counterpart, who with stroke of wing guides a light barque with its charge of happy souls to the mountain of purification. As they land the souls chant the psalm of the Exodus, and with the sign of the cross their angelic guard departs, to renew his mission. The risen sun now shoots full daylight into the sky, obliterating Capricorn from the zenith; the new-come folk inquire the way and Virgil answers that he and his companion are strangers like themselves, whereon the shades observe that Dante breathes and is still in the first life, and in their eagerness almost forget the cleansing for which they have come to the mount. One especially, the musician Casella, presses forward with a look of such affection that the poet opens his arms to embrace him, but he only clasps an empty shade. Dante must now explain the mystery of his own presence in that place while still in the flesh, and Casella in his turn must explain the delay of many months between his death and his admission into the boat of the redeemed that gathers its happy charge at the mouth of Tiber. Dante's heart and senses are still aching from the anguish of Hell; and the loveliness of earth, sea, and sky has re-awakened his perception of the healing power of beauty. So a great longing comes over him once more to hear the sweet singer's voice that has so often soothed him and banished all his cares. Does that power of song which on earth seems akin to the spirit world, survive the great change? Casella's answer is to

sing, in tones the sweetness whereof can never die, a song that Dante himself had written to the praise of Wisdom; whereon Virgil and all the other souls gather eagerly around, till rebuked for this premature indulgence and repose by the stern Cato, who bids them to press forward the cleansing work of the mountain. Whereon they scud along the plain like startled doves.

Now did the sun on that horizon rise
'Neath whose meridian circle's loftiest sway,
Jerusalem, the holy city, lies;

And night, who circles opposite to day, 4
From Ganges bore the scales, which when her might
Prevaileth, from her hand must fall away;

So fair Aurora's cheeks of red and white 7
There where I was, were changing speedily,
Through too great age o'erspread with orange light.

As yet we stayed beside the open sea; 10
As men who think upon their path we were,
Whose bodies tarry, though their hearts go free.

And, lo, as when the morning draweth near, 13
Down in the west above the level main,
Through the thick mists, Mars shineth red and clear;

There then appeared, (so may I see't again!) 16
A light that crossed the sea at such swift pace,
Beside its swiftness any flight were vain.

And when therefrom for a short moment's space 19
I drew mine eyes to question now my guide,
Larger it shone and with a brighter grace.

Then was there seen by me upon each side, 22
Some white, unknown thing, and beneath it, still
Another slowly growing I espied.

As yet my master spake no word until 25
As wings the first great whitenesses were clear,
Then, when at length he knew the pilot well,

"Bend! Bend thy knees!" he cried to me, "for
here 28
"Behold, God's angel! Fold thy hands intent!
"Such ministers shall oft to thee appear.

"See how he scorns all human instrument, 31
"So that for neither oar nor sail has care
"Except his wings, between such far shores sent.

"See how tow'rd Heaven he directs them there; 34
"With white eternal plumes, that are not shed
"As are our mortal locks, plying the air."

Then as toward us near and nearer sped 37
The bird divine, he seemed to glow yet more,
Until, seen close, mine eyes were vanquishéd

And beaten down; and thus he came to shore, 40
Within a ship so swift and light, it weighed
Nowise upon the waves it glided o'er.

With blessedness upon him clear displayed, 43
The heavenly pilot on the stern stood fast,
And more than a hundred souls within were stayed.

"When Israel out of Egypt's bondage passed," 46
They sang together in right joyful mood,
And all the psalm that follows, to the last.

The sign then made he of the blessed rood, 49
Whereat they flung them all upon the strand;
And he, swift as he came, his course renewed.

The new come throng seemed strange unto the land,
Looking about them, as a man well may, 53
When first he tries new things to understand.

On every side the sun shot forth the day, 55
The sun who with his arrows bright did chase
The Goat, from midmost of the heav'n away.

When each newcomer lifted up his face 58
Toward us, saying, "If perchance ye know,
"Point us the way to reach the mountain's base."

Then Virgil answered them, "In sooth ye show, 61
"Ye deem us full of knowledge of this land,
"But we like you, herein as pilgrims go;

"But now, short space before your happy band, 64
"We came by roads so rough and harsh to scale,
"Child's play will seem the climbing now at hand."

The souls when that they knew, as could not fail, 67
That, by my breathing, yet alive was I,
Filled with the marvel grew in wonder, pale.

And like to people who for news draw nigh 70
Toward the olive-bearing messenger,
And crowd on one another heedlessly,

So on my face, there now directed were 73
The eyes of all those happy souls, until
They nigh forgot to haste and make them fair.

And one I saw whom eager love did fill, 76
Who longing to embrace me, forward pressed,
So that he moved me to the selfsame will.

O shadows, save to sight, how vain at best! 79
Three times behind him were my hands clasped tight,
Three times my hands came empty to my breast.

My face I deem showed wonder plain to sight; 82
Whereon the shadow smiled and drew away,
And I thrust forward to pursue its flight.

Gently he sought my eagerness to stay; 85
With that I knew him and I prayed him now,
To speak to me and for a while delay.

He answered: "As I loved thee true, I trow 88
"In life, I love thee yet from life set free,
"Wherefore I stay; but whither goest thou?"

CANTO II

13

" Casella mine, that I again may be, 91
" Here, where I am," I said, " my journey's made;
" But how hath so much time been ta'en from thee? "

And he to me, " No wrong on me is laid 94
" If he who taketh when and whom he will,
" My passage many times hath yet gainsayed;

" For just his will is, and remaineth still. 97
" Truly these three months hath he ta'en, no less
" Than all, in peace, who wished his ship to fill.

" So I whom then that seashore did possess, 100
" Where Tiber's flood grows salt amid the main,
" Was harvested by him in graciousness.

" Now to that harbour turn his wings again; 103
" For all the souls, save those who downward speed
" To Acheron, assemble on that plain."

And I, " Except a new law hath forbid 106
" Thee memory and skill in songs of love,
" Which once were wont to still my longing need,

" May't please thee, let their gentle solace move 109
" Awhile about my soul, since sore distressed
" It is, within my body here to rove."

" Love that within my mind discoursing stay'st," 112
Thus he began a strain so sweet and dear,
That still my soul is with its sweetness blest.

I, and my master, and all they that were 115
With him, seemed well content thereat, as though
None had another thought except to hear.

And as we stood, intent to listen, lo! 118
The aged man, the venerable one,
Came crying loud, "What now, ye spirits slow,

"By what neglectful sloth are ye undone? 121
"Haste to the mountain, that the slough be shed
"That still forbids God's vision to be won."

As when the doves are gathered to be fed, 124
Quiet, and showing not their wonted pride,
Eating the wheat or tares before them spread,

If aught appear whence they are terrified, 127
They leave their food untasted instantly,
Since by more urgent need their hearts are tried:

So saw I that new gathered company 130
The singing leave and seek the hill, as men
Who go, but know not what their fate shall be;

And no less speedy was our parting then 133

CANTO III

WHEN Dante has recovered from his confusion, and Virgil from the self-reproach caused by his momentary neglect of his charge, the poets look west toward the mountain. The sun shines behind them and throws Dante's shadow right before him. Now for the first time he misses Virgil's shadow, and thinks that he has lost his companionship; but Virgil reassures him. It is nine hours ago since the sun rose in the place where lies that part of him which once cast a shadow. The nature of the aerial bodies in the spirit world is unfathomable by human philosophy, which yearns in vain for solutions of the mysteries of faith. When they arrive at the foot of the mountain, the poets are at a loss how to scale its precipices; but at their left Dante perceives a group of souls slowly moving toward them from the south. With Virgil's sanction they go to meet them, and by thus reversing the usual direction which the souls take, following the sun, they excite the amazement of the elect spirits from whom they inquire their way. These sheep without a shepherd—for they are the souls of such as died in contumacy against the Church, and they must dree their rebellion against the chief Shepherd by thirty times as long a space of shepherdless wandering—are yet more amazed than before when they see Dante's shadow and hear from Virgil that he is still in the first life. They make sign to them to reverse their course; and one of them, King Manfred, when Dante has failed to recognise him, tells the story of his death at the battle of Benevento; of the pitiless persecution even of his lifeless body by the Bishop of Cosenza and Pope Clement. He declares that the Infinite Goodness hath so wide an embrace that it enfolds all who turn to it; explains the limitations of the power of the Church's malediction, and implores the prayers of his daughter Constance.

Though by their sudden flight they scattered then
Back to the mountain, o'er the country wide,
Where justice searcheth all the souls of men,

I shrank still nearer to my trusted guide; 4
Without him how could I pursue my course?
Who else had drawn me up the mountain side?

He seemed to me self-smitten with remorse. 7
O conscience clear, with noble virtue graced,
How small a fault o'er thee has bitter force!

As soon as e'er his feet ceased from that haste 10
Which mars in any deed its dignity,
My mind, that erst in narrow bounds was placed,

Expanded, reaching forward eagerly, 13
And on the highest slopes I set my sight
Which tow'rd the Heavens rise from out the sea.

The sun, behind us flaming red and bright, 16
Broken before me, did in form appear,
Such as my body gave to the rays of light.

I turned aside filled with a sudden fear 19
That I was left forlorn, seeing the plain
Only before me dark, and elsewhere clear.

Then turning round: "Wilt thou lose faith again? 22
"Thou know'st I am with thee," my solace said,
"Is then thy trust in me, thy guide, so vain?"

CANTO III

17

“ Over that land the light begins to fade, 25
 “ Where lies the body which once shadowed me;
 “ Ta'en from Brindisi, 'tis in Naples laid.

“ That from me falls no shadow need not be 28
 “ A marvel more, than that one heaven's rays
 “ Do hinder not another's passing free.

“ That Power that wills not that Its hidden ways 31
 “ Lie clear to us, shapes bodies for us still,
 “ To suffer torments, frost or fiery blaze.

“ Mad were he who should hope our reason will 34
 “ E'er hold within its ken, that Infinite Worth
 “ Which in three Persons doth one Substance fill.

“ With ' quia ' be content, O race of earth, 37
 “ For if the whole to minds of men were plain,
 “ No need had been for Mary to give birth.

“ And ye have seen such men desire in vain, 40
 “ Whose need had else been satisfied, I trow,
 “ Which now is given for eternal pain.

“ Of Aristotle, and of Plato now 43
 “ I speak, and many others.” He made end,
 And troubled still, remained with downcast brow.

Meanwhile unto the mountain's foot we wend; 46
 But find the cliff so steep upstanding stay,
 In vain our feet are eager to ascend.

Who from Lerici to Turbia doth stray, 49
Compared with this, an easy stair, I trow,
Will find that wildest, most deserted way.

“ Which side the steep slopes down, what man can
know? ” 52

My master said, and stayed his eager pace,
“ That he may mount who without wings doth go? ”

And whilst toward the ground he bent his face, 55
Searching his mind, to find the pathway clear,
And I looked up, about that rocky place,

On my left hand there did a throng appear 58
Of souls, who seemed tow’rd us to move their feet,
Yet came so slow, they seemed not to draw near.

“ Master,” said I, “ let those thine eyesight greet 61
“ From whom perchance a counsel may be won,
“ If of thyself, thou have it not complete.”

He looked, then gladly was his speech begun, 64
“ Let us go tow’rd them, for they journey slow
“ And thou, confirm thy hope, my dear sweet son.”

Yet distant from us did that people go, 67
A thousand of our paces, or as far
As a good slinger carries at a throw,

When to the hard rocks of the lofty scaur, 70
They pressed, and still and close they stood erect,
As stand to gaze men who in terror are.

CANTO III

19

“ O ye, whose end was blessed, ye souls elect 73
“ Already,” Virgil said, “ by that same peace,
“ That, I believe, ye verily expect,

“ Now tell us, where the mountain steeps decrease 76
“ Enough to let us mount; for those of men
“ Who know most, loss of time doth most displease.”

Like as the sheep, that come from out the pen, 79
By ones and twos and threes, the rest stand by,
Timid, while eye and nose seek earth again,

And what the first doth do, the others try, 82
Huddling against her if she standeth fast,
Silly and quiet, and yet know not why;

So saw I how the leader forward passed 85
Of that fair flock, good fortune's chosen band,
Dignified, yet with modest eyes downcast.

When those in front saw how to my right hand 88
The light was broken on the ground, until
The space up to the rock my shadow spanned,

They drew them backward somewhat and stood still,
And all the rest that followed in their train 92
Not knowing why, were moved by the same will.

“ Without your asking, I confess it plain, 94
“ This is a human body that ye see,
“ Which splits the sunlight on the earth in twain.

" Marvel not therefore, but believe that he, 97
" Not without virtue sent from heaven, thus
" Seeks to surmount these ramparts presently."

So spake my guide; that people courteous 100
Said: " Turn ye, enter then before us there."
And with their hands moved backward signed to us,

And one of them began, " Ah! whosoe'er 103
" Thou art, look on me once as thou dost go;
" Think if thou saw'st me yonder anywhere."

I turned to him, and steadfast sought to know. 106
Bright haired he was and fair, of gracious mien,
But had one eyebrow severed by a blow.

When humbly I disclaimed I could have seen 109
Ever his face before, " Look now," he said,
And showed where o'er his breast, a wound had been;

Then smiling spoke, " Lo now, I am Manfred, 112
" Grandson of Empress Constance know in me;
" Therefore I pray when thy return is sped,

" To my fair daughter go, the mother she 115
" Of Sicily's and Aragon's renown,
" And tell her truth, if other tale there be.

" When by two mortal wounds was overthrown 118
" My body, then I yielded me in grief
" To Him Whose grace to pardon well is known.

- " Terrible were my sins, beyond belief, 121
" But goodness infinite hath arms so wide,
" It welcomes all who seek it for relief.
- " And if Cosenza's pastor, he who plied 124
" The chase of me by Clement's will, had been
" In that same page divine, well-read and tried,
- " The bones of me had still remained, I ween, 127
" At Benevento's bridge head, where the mound,
" The heavy cairn, that guarded them, was seen.
- " Now the rain bathes them and the wind blows round,
" Without the kingdom where the Verde flows, 131
" Whither with tapers quenched he changed their
ground.
- " No curse of theirs man's spirit overthrows, 133
" Beyond where Love Divine can bid it rise
" Whilst hope hath any shoot of green that shows.
- " True is't that who in contumacy dies 136
" With holy Church, though penitent at the end,
" Must stay without this wall with patient sighs,
- " For thirty times the hours that he did spend 139
" In his presumption, if the stern decree
" Be not cut short by prayers that befriend.
- " See now what gladness thou can'st shape for me, 142
" Showing unto my Constance kind and fond
" Thy vision, and this law's supremacy;
" For there great succour comes from those beyond."

CANTO IV

IN the eagerness of his attention to Manfred's tale, Dante takes no note of the passing time, and thereby furnishes a practical refutation of the Platonic doctrine of the plurality of souls; for if the soul that presides over hearing were one, and the soul that notes the passage of time another, then the completest absorption of the former could not so involve the latter as to prevent it from exercising its own special function. It is three and a half hours from sunrise when the souls point out the narrow cleft by which the pilgrims are to ascend the mountain; after which they take their leave of them. It is only the wings of longing and hope that enable Dante to overcome the impediments of the ascent, and bring him through the cleft to the open slope of the mountain, which he breasts at Virgil's direction though it lies at an angle of more than forty-five degrees. In answer to his weary plea for a pause, Virgil urges him to gain a terrace that circles the mount a little above them. There they rest, and, looking east, survey their ascent, after the complacent fashion of mountain climbers; but Dante is amazed to find that the sun is north of the equator and strikes on his left shoulder. Virgil explains that this is because they are in the southern hemisphere, at the antipodes of Jerusalem. Were the sun in Gemini instead of Aries, he would be further to the north yet. Dante rehearses and expands the lesson Virgil has taught him, and then (having meanwhile apparently turned west, facing the slope) makes inquiry as to the height of the mountain. Virgil, without making any direct answer, cheers his weary companion by assuring him that as they mount higher, the ascent becomes ever less arduous, till mounting up becomes as spontaneous as the movement of a ship dropping down stream; and then comes rest. Whereat a voice suddenly rising from behind a great stone lying south

of them, intimates to Dante that he will probably experience a keen desire for rest *before* that consummation. Whereon the poets move to the shady or southern side of the rock where they see souls whose repentance had been deferred to the moment of death, stretched in attitudes of indolence. And in particular Belacqua, an old friend of Dante's, sits hugging his knees like Sloth's own brother. It is he who had given Dante his mocking warning, and who now in the same vein taunts him with his readiness to reproach others for their sloth the moment after he himself had implored Virgil to wait for him; and also with his slowness to understand the astronomical phenomena of the southern heavens. A smile of relief and amusement lightens Dante's face as he finds his friend among the saved, and still his old self. Cannot even the spirit life check his nimble wit or stir his sluggish members? But Belacqua answers sadly that unless aided by the prayer of some soul in grace, he must live as long excluded from purgation as he had lived in the self-exclusion of impenitence upon earth. It is now noonday in Purgatory; night reigns from Ganges to Morocco; and Virgil urges his charge to continue the ascent.

When all our soul is centred on one thing,
Or some one faculty from which is wrought
A sense of pleasure or of suffering,

To other powers it then attendeth not: 4
And this disproves that o'er one soul can be
Another in mankind to kindling brought.

Therefore when anything we hear or see 7
That keeps the soul turned to it and fast bound,
Time flies away for us invisibly,

For 'tis one faculty that hears the sound, 10
Another holds the undivided soul;
This as 'twere chained, and that with freedom
crowned.

To this experience I paid my toll, 13
Hearing that spirit, marvelling indeed;
For fifty full degrees toward its goal,

The sun had climbed, nor did I give it heed 16
Ere came we where one voice from all uprose,
And cried aloud; "Lo! here is that ye need."

The broken hedge where oft the peasant throws 19
A handful of his thorns, the gap to stay,
When the grape cluster dark and darker grows,

More open is than this, where through that day, 22
We went alone, my leader first, then I,
When the throng left us to our upward way.

To scale where Bismantova nears the sky, 25
Feet will suffice; or in Sanleo going,
Or down to Noli; here though must one fly

With the swift wings (I mean the plumage growing 28
From great desire) behind that guide of fame
Who gave me hope, as 'twere a torchlight glowing.

Up where the rock was split, climbing we came; 31
On every side the surface close was pressed,
And feet and hands both did the pathway claim.

CANTO IV

25

When on the upper-edge we came to rest, 34
Of that high cliff, out on the bare hill side;

“ Master,” said I, “ whither now lies our quest? ”

And he to me: “ Let no step down be tried, 37
“ But up the mountain close behind me wend,
“ Until some escort wise may come to guide.”

So high the top, my sight failed of the end, 40
And the slope steeper far than is the ray
That men from centre to mid quadrant send.

Weary I was, when I began to say, 43
“ O Father dear, turn now, regard me still,
“ I must be left alone, unless thou stay.”

“ My son,” he said, “ thus far make strong thy will.”
Showing a terrace just a little high’r, 47
Which on that side surrounds the mighty hill.

His words so spurred me that my will took fire, 49
I forced myself to creep close after then,
Till feet attained the ledge of my desire.

Then both of us reposed a while again, 52
Facing the eastward, whence we strove to soar,
For looking back oft cheers the hearts of men.

My eyes at first sought out the lowly shore, 55
Then turned to view the sun, and much amazed
I found that on our left, its rays did pour,

- Well saw the poet how I stupid gazed, 58
Astounded at the chariot of light,
Where 'twixt the North and us steadfast it blazed,
- Whence he, " If Castor and if Pollux bright, 61
" Were in that mirror's glorious company,
" Which up and down conducts its rays of might,
- " The glowing Zodiac then wouldst thou see 64
" Revolve yet closer pressed unto the Bear,
" Save from its ancient path it wandered free :
- " And how that is, if thou would'st know, with care
" Imagine Zion clearly in thy thought, 68
" Placed with this mount on earth, so that both share
- " A sole horizon, while diverse are wrought 70
" Their hemispheres; wherefore thou'lt see, the way,
" Whereon to drive was Phaeton ill-taught,
- " Must needs pass this, on one side, so to say, 73
" When on the other passing Zion by,
" If clear before thy mind, these things I lay."
- " Truly, my master, never," answered I, 76
" Have I seen aught so manifest as this,
" Where erst my intellect at fault did lie;
- " That which Equator in our Sciences, 79
" Is named, mid-circle of the course of heaven,
" Which 'twixt the sun and winter ever is,

“ From here towards the North, is distant, even 82
“ As far as Jews of old, as thou hast shown,
“ Toward the warmer climes beheld it driven.

“ But if it please thee, gladly were it known 85
“ To me, how long our road, because this height
“ Goes further than mine eyes can reach alone.”

And he to me, “ This mountain hath such might 88
“ That steep it ever is at first to ascend,
“ But as one mounts, the task becomes more light.

“ Wherefore, when easy grows it at the end, 91
“ Until to climb it, is a toil for thee
“ As slight as for a boat down stream to wend,

“ Then at thy journey’s goal thou’lt surely be: 94
“ There mayst thou hope to rest thy weariness;
“ No more I say; take thou this truth from me.”

As ceased the speech that eased my longing’s stress, 97
A voice close by us said; “ Perchance ere then,
“ Thou wilt desire to rest thee, none the less.”

At sound of it, we both turned round again, 100
And on our left perceived a mass of stone,
That till that moment had escaped our ken.

Thither we hied; and so to us were shown 103
People, behind the rock, resting in shade,
As men in laziness will throw them prone,

And one of them, who seemed full weary made, 106
Was clasping as he sat, both of his knees,
While his face low, and down between them stayed.

“ O my sweet lord,” I said, “ if thee it please, 109
“ Look at that one who seems more negligent,
“ Than if his sister’s self were slothful Ease.”

Then turned he to us and became intent, 112
Raising his face a little o’er his thigh,
And said, “ Go thou up, who art valiant ! ”

Thereat I knew him, and that toil, whereby 115
My breath was still a little hinderèd,
Held me not back from him, and after I

Had reached him, scarcely lifted he his head, 118
And then, “ Hast thou well noted how the sun
“ Urges his car, on thy left side ? ” he said.

His lazy movements, and the brief words won 121
From him, a little moved my lips to smile;
Then I; “ Belacqua, all my grieving’s done

“ For thee henceforth, but tell me why this while 124
“ Thou’rt seated here? An escort dost thou wait,
“ Or have old habits caught thee with their guile ? ”

And he; “ What gain to mount unto the gate, 127
“ My brother? though to God’s fair bird I kneel,
“ ’Twould hold me from the torments separate.

" First, here the heavens must around me wheel, 130

" As long as in my life they circuit made,

" Since I deferred till late, the sighs that heal;

" Unless ere then, a prayer should come to aid, 133

" That from a heart that lives in grace should pour.

" On prayers by Heav'n unheard what power is laid?"

And now the poet mounted up before, 136

Saying, " Come now, behold the orb of light

" Touches meridian, and from Ganges shore

" Unto Morocco spreads the foot of night." 139

CANTO V

As they pass up the mountain, Dante's shadow still excites the amazement of the souls; but Virgil bids him pay no heed to their exclamations. A group of souls chanting the *Miserere* breaks into a cry of wonder, and when two of them, sent out as messengers, have received Virgil's statement that Dante is still in the first life, the whole group crowd around him. They tell him that they are souls of the violently slain, who repented and made their peace with God at the last moment. Virgil bids Dante pursue his path, but suffers him to promise to bear news of these souls to their friends on earth and implore their prayers. Dante hears the tale of Jacopo del Cassero. Then Buonconte da Monte Feltro tells the story of his death at Campaldino, the struggle of the angel and the devil for his soul, and the fate of his deserted body. And lastly Pia rehearses, in brief pathetic words, the tragedy of her wedded life, and implores the poet when he is rested from his long journey to bethink him of her.

Already I had left that shadowy band,
And followed in the footsteps of my guide,
When one behind me pointed with his hand,

"Behold, the light seems not to shine," he cried, 4
"Upon the leftward hand of him below,
"He seems as life did still in him abide."

Mine eyes I turned, hearing this speech, and lo! 7
I saw how marvelling, they gazed at me,
Me only, and the sunlight broken so.

CANTO V

31

“ Why thus entangled should thy spirit be? ” 10
 My master said, “ that slackened is thy gait;
 “ If here they whisper, what is that to thee?

“ Follow thou me, and let the people prate; 13
 “ Stand as a massive tower, whose summit nought
 “ Of driving winds can move however great.

“ For alway he in whom thought after thought 16
 “ Up surges, sets his own mark back, for then
 “ One saps the vigour by the other wrought.”

What answer save “ I come ” had not been vain? 19
 I said it, somewhat coloured by that hue
 Which pardon for a man can often gain.

Meantime across the mountain slope, in view, 22
 Some space before us, came a people by,
 And “ Miserere ” verse by verse sang through.

When that my body, they did once espy, 25
 Giving no passage to the rays, their song
 Suddenly changed into a long hoarse cry;

And two as messengers from out the throng, 28
 With eager questioning toward us ran;
 “ For knowledge of your state, behold we long ”—

“ Ye can go hence,” my master then began, 31
 “ And bear this back to them that sent you here,
 “ That flesh indeed is the body of this man.

- " If that they stayed, as seemeth to me clear, 34
" Seeing his shadow, then enough is said;
" Honour ye him, to you he may prove dear."
- Never at early night so swiftly sped, 37
Have I seen flaming vapours cleave the sky,
Or August clouds, at set of sun outspread,
- But that in less time, back those souls did fly, 40
And then, joined with the rest, wheeled round, almost
As with loose rein a squadron charges by.
- " This people pressing on us, is a host," 43
The poet said, " and thee they will entreat,
" But go thou on, and harken as thou go'st."
- " O soul, that journeyest now thy joy to greet, 46
" With those same limbs, that erst wert born with
thee,"
They cried in coming, " Stay awhile thy feet;
- " Look, any of us, didst thou ever see? 49
" So tidings of him yonder, mayst thou bear;
" Ah why press on? Why may no pausing be?
- " A death by violence, behold, we share, 52
" And sinners to our latest hour we went;
" Then light from heaven made our souls aware.
- " So therefore, pardoning and penitent, 55
" And reconciled to God, we left life's ways;
" To see Him, all our eager hearts are bent."

CANTO V

33

And I, " Though on your faces now I gaze, 58

" None can I recognise; but if aught please

" That I can do, ye spirits born for praise,

" Speak ye; and I will do it, for that peace, 61

" That, following the footsteps of my guide,

" I seek from world to world and may not cease."

And one began, " In thee do we confide, 64

" And need no oath to trust us to thy hand,

" Unless by lack of power 'tis set aside.

" So I who only speak first of this band, 67

" Pray, that if ever thou that country see,

" That 'twixt Romagna lies, and Charles's land,

" That thou be bounteous of thy prayers to me 70

" In Fano, so that orisons may sound,

" And of my grievous sins I purged may be.

" There was I born; but felt that mortal wound, 73

" Whence issued forth the blood that held my life,

" Within the fold of Antenorian ground,

" There where I deemed me most secure from strife;

" Through him of Este was it wrought, whose hate

" Far beyond justice, was against me rife.

" If to La Mira I had hastened straight 79

" At Oriaco, when the charge did sound,

" There, where men breathe, still living were I yet.

- “ I fled unto the swamps, but there was bound 82
“ By reeds and mire, so that I fell, to see
“ A pool shed from my veins form on the ground.”
- “ So thy desire, that surely draweth thee 85
“ Upward, may be fulfilled,” another said,
“ With kindly pity aid the need of me.
- “ Buonconte I, of Montefeltro bred, 88
“ None, not Giovanna e’en, for me hath care;
“ Wherefore I go ’mid these, and hang my head.”
- And I to him; “ What force or chance soe’er, 91
“ From Campaldino’s field, could draw thee so,
“ That of thy sepulchre, was no man ware? ”
- “ At Casentino’s foot,” he said, “ doth flow 94
“ A river, Archiano; Apennine,
“ Above the Hermitage, its source doth know.
- “ There where its name it must at length resign, 97
“ Came I, a fugitive, my throat pierced through,
“ On foot, dyeing the plain with blood of mine;
- “ There lost I sight, and speech was ended too, 100
“ Ended with Mary’s name; and there I fell,
“ And earth thenceforth only my body knew.
- “ I’ll say the truth, that thou to men wilt tell; 103
“ God’s angel took me, but the other cried,
“ ‘ Thou heavenly one, why dost thou steal from hell?

- “ ‘ Though thou hast his eternal part, denied 106
“ ‘ To me, by that small tear, yet on the rest
“ ‘ In other fashion, shall my will be tried.’
- “ How in the air is gathered, thou hast guessed 109
“ That vapour damp, that when it mounts above
“ Is turned by cold to water manifest.
- “ That evil will, that evil still doth love, 112
“ He joined with intellect, and mist and wind,
“ By powers which in his nature were, he drove;
- “ Then all the valley, as the day declined, 115
“ He wrapt in cloud, and lowering made the sky,
“ From Pratomagno to the heights behind;
- “ The pregnant air to water turned thereby, 118
“ And fell in rain, and to the rills then went
“ All that on earth was not allowed to lie;
- “ And as in mighty floods it met and blent, 121
“ Towards the royal stream so swift it wound,
“ That by no force soe’er could it be pent.
- “ My frozen body raging Archian found 124
“ E’en at its mouth, and into Arno’s sway
“ It swept, and from my breast the cross unbound,
- “ Which I had made when faint with pain I lay: 127
“ It rolled me by its banks, and o’er its bed,
“ Then wrapped and covered me, with all its prey.”

" Ah, when back to the world thy feet are led, 130

" And thou art rested from thy journeying,"

After the second, a third spirit said,

" Then me, La Pia, to thy memory bring. 133

" Siena made, Maremma me unmade,

" He knows who gave his troth, whose wedding-ring,

" I wore as wife, while on the earth I stayed." 136

CANTO VI

LIKE a successful gamester who must cleave his way by payments through the host whose quickened sense of friendship overflows in obstructive congratulations and reminiscences, so Dante must pay his way by promises through the crowd of souls to whom he has power of granting such precious boons. Of some of these souls he tells us news, not without side thrusts of warning or reproach at the living. When again free to converse with his guide, Dante asks him to explain the seeming contradiction between the anxiety of these souls for the prayers of others, and his (Virgil's) declaration that the divine Fates cannot be bent by prayer. Virgil explains, firstly, that no bending of the divine will is involved in the granting of prayer; secondly, that his rebuke was uttered to souls not in grace; and, finally, that the complete solution of such questions is not for him (Virgil), but for Beatrice; at the mention of whose name Dante wishes to make greater speed in ascending the mountain, whereto Virgil answers that the journey is of more days than one. The poets, now in the shade of the mountain (since they are on its eastern slope and the sun is already west of north) so that Dante no longer casts a shadow, and is therefore not instantly to be recognised as a living man, perceive the soul of Sordello gazing upon them like a couching lion; but on hearing that Virgil is a Mantuan, he breaks through all reserve and embraces him as his fellow-countryman. The love of these two fellow-citizens calls back to Dante's heart the miserable dissensions that rend the cities of Italy, and the callousness with which the Emperors leave them to their fate. But from the reproaches thus launched against the Italians, Florence is sarcastically excepted, till the sarcasm breaks down in a wail of reproachful pity.

After a game of dice comes to a close,
He who has lost remains behind to grieve,
Sadly he learns, repeating all the throws;

And with the other, all the people leave; 4
One goes in front, one plucks him from behind,
One to remind him takes him by the sleeve:

He halts not, giving here or there his mind; 7
Who sees his hand upraised falls back subdued,
And so his way from out the crowd he'll find.

Thus then did I, amid that multitude, 10
Turning my face here, there, and all around,
And promising—won free from them that wooed.

I saw the Aretine, whom harsh death found 13
By Ghin di Tacco's arms so fierce and fell;
And him who hastening in pursuit was drown'd;

Federico Novello, I could tell, 16
Praying with outstretched hands, and him through
whom
The good Marzucco's strength was shown so well.

I saw Count Orso, and the soul whose doom 19
To leave its mortal frame was hatred's deed,
And for no fault, conceived in envy's womb,

Pier dalla Broccia—let her take heed 22
The lady of Brabant, while yet she live,
Lest to a worse flock yet this act may lead.

CANTO VI

39

Soon as from mid these shades I could arrive, 25
 Who prayed alone that men should pray, and there
 Speed on the course to blessedness should give;

Then I: " One passage I remember where 28
 " Expressly thou deniest, light of mine,
 " That Heaven's law should yield to human prayer.

" Yet for nought else do all these people pine. 31
 " Shall then, this hope of theirs be ever vain,
 " Or have I failed to grasp those words of thine? "

And he to me: " Both is my writing plain, 34
 " And yet no hope of these shall failure know,
 " If with a balanced mind, thou search again.

" The height of justice is nowise brought low, 37
 " If in a moment fire of love abate
 " All that the soul that here is lodged may owe.

" But where I did affirm that point, what weight 40
 " Of prayer for such default could make defence,
 " When that the prayer from God was separate.

" But in a doubt so deep and so immense 43
 " Thou must not rest, unless by her command,
 " The light 'twixt truth and thy intelligence.

" 'Tis Beatrice—can'st thou not understand? 46
 " Surely thou'lt see her when these heights are passed
 " Smiling and happy in that highest land."

Then I: " My Lord, O hasten now at last; 49
" Already lessened is my weariness,
" And see the shadow by the hillside cast."

" We, with this day, onward shall surely press," 52
He answered me, " As far as yet we may,
" But other is the fact than thou dost guess.

" Thou'lt see return ere yet thou end thy way, 55
" Him whom the slope has hidden from our eyes,
" So that of him thou breakest not a ray.

" But see a soul in solitary guise, 58
" Stands there alone and notes us as we go,
" He'll show us where the quickest pathway lies."

We came to him: Ah, how thou stood'st, I know 61
Thou Lombard soul, haughty, full of disdain,
Moving thine eyes so royally and slow.

For any word from him we looked in vain, 64
He let us go, and only gazing, stayed
Just as a couching lion will remain.

Yet Virgil none the less drew near and prayed 67
That he would mark for us the best ascent;
Then no reply to that request he made,

But of our country and our life was bent 70
At once to learn. And my dear guide began:
" Mantua " . . . and that shade erst self intent,

CANTO VI

41

From where he stood at once toward him ran, 73
And each embraced the other, as he cried:
" I am Sordello, and thy countryman."

Ah Italy! thou slave, where woes abide, 76
Ship in the driving gale unpiloted,
A harlot, not a queen of acres wide,

Merely the sweet name of his city sped 79
That gentle spirit swift in courtesy,
Till greeting to his townsman should be paid;

And now can nought save war be found in thee, 82
Among the living, each by the other torn,
Though by one moat and wall they guarded be.

Search all the shores, O wretched one forlorn, 85
Of all thy seas, then look within thy breast,
If peace within thee anywhere is born.

What is it worth, Justinian's bridle, pressed 88
On thee anew, if that the saddle's bare?
Without it, in less shame thou would'st be dressed.

Ah people, that should'st true obedience wear, 91
And in the saddle set Caesar again,
If of God's message thou had'st any care!

See now, how vicious doth this beast remain 94
Lacking correction that the spurs should show,
Since thou layed'st hand upon her bridle rein,

- O German Albert, who hast let her go, 97
Till wild and all untamed she dashes free;
And should'st instead bestride the saddle bow.
- Just judgment from the stars shall fall on thee 100
And thine, and be it strange and manifest,
That full of fear may thy successors be.
- Thee and thy father, greed hath so possessed 103
Holding you both afar, ye did allow
The Empire's garden to become a waste.
- Montecchi see and Cappelletti now, 106
Monaldi, Filippeschi, heedless man!
These fearful, those with sorrow weighted brow.
- Come, cruel one, come, if thou darest scan 109
The oppression of thy nobles, heal their sore!
Thou'lt see how safe is Santaflora's span.
- Come, see thy Rome who weeps as ne'er before, 112
Alone and widowed, crying day and night,
" My Caesar, why goest thou by me no more? "
- See how thy people in their love delight 115
In one another, and if no pity move
Come and let shame for thy renown affright!
- And if it is allowed me, Highest Jove, 118
Thou Who on earth wert crucified for us,
Are Thy just eyes turned elsewhere in love?

CANTO VI

43

Or is Thy preparation hidden thus 121
For some good end, that Thou hast surely willed,
In depths of wisdom, all mysterious?

With tyrants are Italia's cities filled, 124
And every clown that comes and takes a side,
Is held as one to play Marcellus skilled.

O Florence mine, content thou may'st abide! 127
This outburst hath no power thy soul to try,
Whose race with wisdom is well satisfied.

Some, who love justice, late will let it fly, 130
For without counsel is the bow undone,
But truth is on thy lips unceasingly.

The common burdens many seek to shun, 133
But eagerly, not staying for appeal,
"Behold, I stoop, and take this burden on,"

Thy people cry. What gladness must thou feel, 136
So rich, so peaceful thou, wise without stint!
That I speak truth, the facts themselves reveal.

Athens and Lacedaemon, the first mint 139
Of ancient laws, where civil arts shone bright,
Of noble life gave but a petty hint,

Compared with thee, so subtle in foresight 142
That all that thou can'st in October spin,
Through half November doth not reach outright.

How oft thy memory's brief time within, 145
Laws, coinage, customs, offices, by thee
Are changed, and members all renewed have been.

And if thou wilt take thought, and clearly see, 148
Thou shalt behold thee like some fevered one
Whose pillows cannot ease her misery,

Who restless turns, seeking her pain to shun. 151

CANTO VII

AFTER repeatedly embracing Virgil, only because he is a Mantuan, Sordello questions him further; and on hearing who he is, after a moment's pause, amazed and half-incredulous, falls at his feet to embrace his knees. In answer to Sordello, Virgil rehearses in words of deepest pathos the nature of his mission and the state of the souls in Limbo who practised the moral, but were never clad with the theological, virtues. In answer to Virgil's questioning concerning the way, Sordello expounds the law of the mount which suffers no soul to ascend while the sun is below the horizon; and he offers to lead the pilgrims, ere the now approaching sunset, to a fitting place of rest, where they shall find noteworthy souls. In a little lap or dell of the mountain they find the pensive souls of kings and rulers who had neglected their higher functions for selfish ease or selfish war. Now they are surrounded by every soothing beauty of nature; but relief from the serious cares of life, which erst they sought unduly, is now an anguish to them, and their yearning goes forth to the active purgation of the seven terraces of torment above them. With the enumeration of the kings—old enemies singing in harmony, and fathers mourning over the sins of their still living sons—are mingled tributes to the worth, or gibes at the degeneracy of the reigning monarchs, and reflections on the unlikeness of sons and fathers.

When they had given greetings frank and fair,
Three times and four, Sordello drew away,
And, " Who art thou ? " he questioned of him there,

" Ere yet this mountain's steeps they could essay, 4

" The souls, worthy to mount unto God's side,

" My bones Octavian in the earth did lay.

" Virgil I am; in me no sin did bide . 7

" That lost me Heav'n, save lack of faith in me."

Thus then my leader to his speech replied.

As one who sees before him suddenly, 10

A thing whereat he marvels to assent,

Saying aloud: " It is; it cannot be "—

So thus seemed he; and then his head he bent, 13

And turning with humility his face,

Embraced him, where the lesser is content.

And said, " O glory of the Latin race, 16

" Through whom our speech hath set forth all its
might!

" O praise eternal of my native place;

" What merit or what grace grants me this sight? 19

" Tell me, if worthy I am found to know,

" Com'st thou from Hell, and from which cloister's
night."

" Through all the circles of the realm of woe," 22

He answered, " came I hither. Virtue won

" From heaven moved me, and with it I go.

" The sight was lost to me of that high sun, 25

" That thou desirest, known of me too late,

" Not through my deeds but all I left undone.

- “ Down there, there lies a not tormented state, 28
“ But set with shadows only, whose lament,
“ Not cries and groans, but sighs alone create.
- “ There bide I with the babes all innocent, 31
“ Bitten by tooth of Death too suddenly,
“ Ere yet from human guilt they were exempt;
- “ There bide, with those who with the virtues three,
“ The holy ones, clad not themselves, but knew 35
“ The others and pursued them, sinlessly.
- “ But if thou know'st and can'st, give us some clue 37
“ Whereby more quickly we may journey, till
“ The gate of Purgatory we enter through.”
- “ We have no fixed place,” answered he, “ and still 40
“ 'Tis granted me to go up and around,
“ And while I may, I'll guide with right good will.
- “ But see the sun already nears the ground, 43
“ And no step upward canst thou make by night,
“ Wherefore a resting-place must needs be found.
- “ Souls are there near, away toward the right; 46
“ If thou consent, thy steps to them I'll lead;
“ They will, I deem, find favour in thy sight.”
- “ How then,” the answer came, “ if one gave heed 49
“ To mount by night, would any bar his way?
“ Or is it that in truth he could not speed? ”

The good Sordello did a finger lay 52
On earth and drew thereon, and said, " This line
" Thou could'st not cross if ended were the day.

" Not that aught else impedeth thee in fine, 55
" Save the night's darkness if thou would'st ascend,
" But *that* makes powerless all will of thine.

" Truly by night, men's steps might downward tend,
" And erring, wander round the mountain side, 59
" Whilst the horizon holds the day close penned."

Thereat my lord, as marvelling, replied, 61
" Lead us then onward, as thou sayest, where
" We may contented through the night abide."

A little space we had advanced from there, 64
When I perceived the mountain hollowed deep,
As valleys are in this our mortal air.

" Then," said that shade, " therein we now may
creep, 67
" So bosomed in the mountain shall we lie,
" And vigil for the morrow can we keep."

Nor smooth nor steep the path we travelled by, 70
That winding to the hollow's margin led,
There where the edge full half away doth die.

Gold and fine silver, cloth of white or red, 73
Or emerald new splintered fresh and green,
Or lucent wood from the far Indian glade,

49

76

79

82

85

88

91

94

97

- " Ottocar is he, a far better thing 100
" In swaddling clothes, than bearded Wenceslas
" His son, round whom such lust and sloth do cling.
- " And that small-nosed one who close counsel has 103
" With him so kind in aspect, died hard pressed,
" And all deflowered by him the lily was;
- " See him, how there he beats upon his breast. 106
" Look how the other, with his open hand,
" Makes, sighing, for his cheek a bed to rest.
- " Wife's father of the bane of France's land 109
" And father they, they know his foul life's wrong,
" Hence comes the grief that makes them thus unmanned.
- " He who so huge limbed seems, and sets his song 112
" With that strong featured one, on him the cord
" Of every worth was girt and did belong.
- " And if the lad had followed him as lord, 115
" Who sits behind him, of the self same mould,
" Then had the worth from vase to vase been poured,
- " Which of the other heirs may not be told: 118
" Fred'rick and James each now his kingdom sways,
" The better heritage no man doth hold.
- " Rarely our human virtues find their ways 121
" From root to branch: this wills He, Who alone
" Gives it, that men may seek it from His grace,

CANTO VII

51

- " Let my words also show the big-nosed one, 124
" (And Peter, singing with him) for whom yet
" Apulia and Provence make daily moan.
- " A worser plant did that fair seed beget, 127
" As Constance boasts her of her husband's worth,
" More than can Beatrice and Margaret.
- " See him who loved a simple life on earth, 130
" Henry of England, from the rest afar,
" His branches brought a better fruit to birth.
- " He, lower down, who where the others are 133
" Looks upward humbly, Marquis William is,
" Through whom made Alessandria grievous war
- " On Monferrat and on the Canavese." 136

CANTO VIII

At the pensive hour of sunset the souls devoutly join in their evening hymn, with eyes uplifted to heaven. As though to remind them that while outside the gate of the true Purgatory their wills are not intrinsically above the reach of temptation, but are guarded only by the express intervention and protection of divine grace, two angels descend and stand on either bank of the dell to guard them against the serpent who would enter this counterpart of Eden. At the mention of the serpent Dante shrinks close up to Virgil; but Sordello invites them to descend, as the twilight deepens, into the little vale, where Dante meets his friend Nino, Judge of Gallura, and in answer to his question tells him that he is still in the first life; whereon both he and Sordello start back in amazement. Nino summons Conrad Malaspina to witness this wonder of God's grace, and then turning to Dante again, implores him to obtain the prayers of his daughter; for his wife, betrothed to a Visconte, has surely forgotten him. Dante, looking to heaven, notes that in this season of repose the four stars that represent the moral virtues have vanished behind the mountain, and the three that represent the theological virtues shine in the sky. This is one of the many indications that the proper business of Purgatory is ethical, the recovery of the sound moral will. The season in which the souls may actually ascend is the one over which the four stars preside. Meanwhile the dreaded serpent approaches, but the angels swoop like celestial hawks upon it, and having put it to flight return to their posts. During the whole assault Conrad has not ceased to gaze on Dante; and he now asks him for news of his country of Valdemagra, and of his kinsfolk there; to which Dante replies that he has never visited those parts,

but the noble character of the Malaspini rings through all Europe; whereon he receives the significant comment that ere six years are gone he shall know the worth of the Malaspini better than reportingly.

It was the hour which casts a tender spell
On sailors' hearts, their longing backward turning,
When to their friends so dear is said farewell,

Which stings the new sped pilgrim with love's burning,
If far away he hears the chime, which o'er 5
The dying day, in sorrow seemeth yearning:

When I began to be intent no more 7
On hearing; then I saw one spirit rise,
Who, with his hand our silence did implore.

Both palms he joined and lifted up, his eyes 10
Fast fixing on the East as though he said
To God, "All other things are vanities."

"Te lucis ante," so devoutly sped 13
Forth from his lips, in such sweet music dressed
That from my mind all sense of self was shed.

The others sweetly and with joyous zest 16
Through the whole hymn accompanied aright,
While on the supernal wheels their eyes did rest.

Make keen, O reader, for the truth thy sight, 19
For now indeed so subtly thin the veil,
To pass within it were a task most light.

That noble army, whereof tells my tale, 22
Looked up, I saw, thereafter silently,
As though expectant, lowly all and pale.

And then two angels, saw I, from on high 25
Descending low, each with a flaming sword
Which broken was and pointless to mine eye.

Such green, as tender new-born leaves afford, 28
Their raiment was, which by their wings of green
Smitten and fanned, behind them far outsoared.

One coming to stand above us there was seen, 31
The other on the further bank came down,
So that the people were enclosed between.

Well could I see their fair locks shining crown, 34
But at their faces eyes were dazed, as sense
That by excess is wholly overthrown.

"Both come from Mary's bosom, sent to us thence,"
Sordello said, "that when the serpent glide 38
"Hither, the valley shall not lack defence."

Then I, who, trembling, knew not by what side 40
'Twould come, turned round and placed me, icy cold,
Close to the trusty shoulders of my guide.

Again Sordello; "Now to the valley's fold 43
"Mid the great shades go we, and speak befriended,
"Great joy 'twill give to them, thee to behold."

CANTO VIII

55

Only three paces, deem I, I descended 46
And was below, and saw one gazing there
As though to recognise me, he was minded.

It was the hour when darkened grew the air, 49
Yet not so dark that 'twixt his eyes and mine,
What erst was hidden, could itself declare.

Each toward the other did our steps incline; 52
Courteous Judge Nino, then what joy was shed,
Not mid the damned, to see thát form of thine!

No greeting fair was left 'tween us unsaid. 55
Then asked he, " Where this mount sinks to the plain,
" Is't long since o'er the waters thou wert sped? "

" Ah," said I, " but this morn from realms of pain 58
" I journeyed, and my first life yet possess,
" And journeying thus, the other strive to gain."

And when my answer pierced their consciousness, 61
Backward at once shrank both Sordello and he
As people who bewilderment confess.

One turned tow'rd Virgil, the other instantly 64
Cried unto one seated anigh that place,
" Up Conrad, come, the will of God to see! "

Then turned to me, " By that especial grace 67
" Thou owest unto Him Who hideth e'er
" His first intent in undiscovered ways,

" When thou shalt o'er the waste of waters fare, 70

" My Giovanna bid to intercede

" For me, where aye is heard the stainless prayer.

" No more her mother's love of me hath heed 73

" I think, since she has changed her wimples white

" For which she'll long again, in hapless need.

" By her 'tis easy to conceive aright 76

" How long in woman burns the fire of love,

" Save eye and touch bring oft new kindling light.

" A tomb less fair, will that he fashions prove, 79

" The viper, blazoned on the Milan shield,

" Than would Gallura's cock have raised above."

Thus spake he, while upon his face was sealed 82

The sign of righteous ardour, self-same treasure

Whose glowing heat was in his breast revealed.

Greedy mine eyes again of heaven's pleasure 85

Turned even there where move the stars most slow,

As nearest to the axle, wheels in measure.

My chief said, " Son, why gazest upward so? " 88

And I to him, " Upon those torches three

" Wherewith the pole this side is all aglow."

" The four bright stars," with that he answered me,

" Are set beyond, which thou this morn descried, 92

" And these are risen, in their stead to be."

CANTO VIII

57

Sordello while he spake, drew him aside 94
And said " Behold our adversary near,"
And made his finger to our eyes a guide.

Upon that side which doth no rampart rear 97
To guard the valley, crept a serpent in;
Perchance the same to Eve gave bitter cheer.

'Mid grass and flowers glided the snake of sin, 100
And to its back turned now and then its head,
Licking, as doth a beast that sleeks its skin.

I saw not, so by me cannot be said, 103
How the celestial falcons 'gan to move,
But well I saw how both in motion sped.

Hearing the green wings, how the air they clove, 106
The serpent fled; the angels instantly
Wheeled backward, flying to their posts above.

The shade, called by the judge, who close to me 109
Had come, throughout the whole of that assault
Not once from gazing at me was set free.

“ So may the light that guides thee, to exalt, 112
“ Find in thy will sufficient wax to make
“ Unto th’ enamelled summit, no default,”

Began he; "if true tidings we may take 115
"From thee of Valdimacra, or near by,
"Tell me, who held there once a mighty stake.

"Conrado Malaspino, called am I; 118
"Am not the elder, but from him descend;
"Love of mine own, here do I purify."

"O," said I, "through your lands ne'er did I wend,
"But through all Europe, where dwells man so mean
"As not to know their fame that hath no end?"

"Renown which honoureth your house is seen 124
"So to proclaim both countryside and lord,
"That well he knows who there hath never been.

"I swear, so may good speed be my reward, 127
"Your honoured race strips not from off its name
"Glory of purse or glory of the sword.

"Though the world's guilty leader guides to shame,
"Custom and nature grant thy house to tread 131
"Straight, though alone, scorning paths of ill-fame."

And he: "Depart now! for within the bed 133
"Bestriden by the Ram's four feet, the Sun
"Shall not a seventh time to rest be sped,

"Ere this, thy courteous opinion, 136
"Nailed in thy head shall be with greater nails,
"Than from the words of men may yet be won;

"If that the course of judgment nowise fails." 139

CANTO IX

It is now about two and a half hours since sunset. The Scorpion has begun to pass the horizon, and the lunar aurora is already whitening in the east, when Dante, reclining in the bosom of the valley, resting from his four-night watch and the toil and anguish of his journey, drops into a deep sleep. In the morning hour when dreams are true, he seems to be clasped in the talons of an eagle—the symbol at once of justice and of baptismal regeneration—and to be borne up into the sphere of fire, the burning of which awakens him; and he starts to find himself alone with Virgil, higher on the mount, nigh to the gate of Purgatory proper. He learns from his guide that, as he slept, Lucia bore him away from Sordello and the other denizens of the valley, and placed him here. His dismay is thus turned into delight as he follows his guide to the narrow portal with its three steps and its angel guard, who first challenges the pilgrims, but on learning their divine authority gives them courteous welcome. On the steps of sincerity, contrition, and love, the poet mounts to the gate and throws himself at the feet of its guardian to implore admission. The angel carves on Dante's brow seven P's, the symbol of the seven deadly sins (*peccata*), which are purged on the terraces above, and then turning the golden and the silver key which he holds in charge from Peter, he admits Dante; with the solemn warning that he is not to look behind him, when once past the gate. The seldom-turned hinges grate as the portal swings, and a half-heard song of praise to God is the first sound that falls on the poet's ear within the gate, drawing his heart upward.

Ancient Tithonus' mistress even now,
Leaving the arms of her sweet lover there,
White at the Eastern terrace 'gan to grow;

With gems was glittering her forehead fair, 4
Set in the form of that cold beast that stings
Men with its tail; and night, there where we were,

Of the three steps wherewith she upward springs 7
Climbing on high, two had already passed;
And when the third was stooping down its wings,

I from whom Adam was not all outcast, 10
Sank down, sleep vanquished, where already all
We five were seated on the ground soft grassed.

Then at the hour when waxeth musical 13
The swallow nigh the dawn and telleth o'er
Sad lays which haply former griefs recall;

And when our mind, a pilgrim now far more 16
Away from flesh, and less by thinking pent,
To vision almost of a seer can soar;

An eagle poised on high, with plumes besprent 19
With gold and with spread wings, I seemed to see
Within my dream, now to swoop down intent.

And to myself then seemed I there to be 22
Where Ganymede abandoned all his kin
When snatched into the high consistory.

“Perchance from other place;” I thought within, 25
“His talons scorn to bear aught upward; here
“Haply his custom is, his prey to win.”

Then having wheeled awhile, methought that sheer
And fierce as lightning falling, down he swept 29
And caught me up, right to the fiery sphere.

It seemed around us both the flames upleapt; 31
So scorched was I by the imagined flow,
That needs must I awaken, where I slept.

Achilles started in surprise e'en so, 34
(Glancing with wakened eyes the country o'er,
Since where he was in truth he could not know,

When safe from Chiron unto Scyros shore, 37
Afterward through the Greeks abandonèd,
Sleeping within her arms, his mother bore,)

As then I started, when the slumber fled 40
From off my face, and pale I grew as he
Who sudden groweth cold as ice with dread.

Only my comfort rested near to me, 43
And more than two hours high the sun upstood,
And turned mine eyes were tow'rd the open sea.

“Fear not,” my lord said, “for the place is good 46
“Whereat we are, so be assured in heart,
“Do not hold back, put forth thy hardihood.

" At Purgatory now arrived thou art, 49
" Behold the walls that compass it around,
" The entrance see, there where they seem to part.

" Erstwhile, i' the dawn, that ere the day is found, 52
" When sleeping was thy soul within thee, there
" On flowers that adorn that lower ground,

" ' I am Lucia,' said a lady fair 55
" Who came; ' to forward him upon his road,
" ' Grant that this sleeping man away I bear.'

" She took thee, while Sordello still abode 58
" There and the shades of worth, and with the light
" Came upward, and upon her track I trode.

" Here did she place thee; then her eyes so bright 61
" Shewed where the path unto the opening led;
" Then sleep and she together took their flight."

As a man reassured who was in dread, 64
Who changes into comfort all his fear,
After the truth before him is outspread,

I changed; and when my leader saw me here 67
Released from care, then where the rampart lies
He mounted, and I followed upward, near.

Reader, thou seest how exalted is 70
My subject, therefore if I wield a strain
Of greater art, then wonder not at this,

CANTO IX

63

Near coming, when the place we could attain 73
Where erst it seemed to me a break occurred,
As when a fissure splits a wall in twain,

A gate I saw, that turned upon the third 76
Of steps that led there, diverse coloured, and
A warden, who as yet spake not a word.

And as my eyes more opened freely scanned, 79
I saw him seated on the step most high,
So bright, before his face I could not stand.

His hand upheld a naked sword, whereby 82
So swift reflected were the rays on us,
That oft it vanquishèd mine eager eye.

“ Ye who stand there, what would ye ? ” even thus 85
Began he then, “ what escort hither brought ?
“ Beware lest the ascent prove perilous ! ”

“ A heavenly lady, in these things well taught,” 88
Replied my master, “ even now hath said,
“ ‘ Ascend ye thither, there the gate is wrought.’ ”

“ And may your steps by her to good be sped ; ” 91
The courteous warden of the gate returned,
“ Come hither then upon our stair to tread.”

The first step where we came, thereon I learned, 94
Was marble white, polished and smooth to view :
My form therein reflected I discerned,

The second of a stone of darker hue 97
Than perse, and scorched and seared it sure had been,
For in its length and breadth 'twas fissured through.

The third, more massive from above, in sheen 100
The flaming red of porphyry confessed,
Like blood that spurting from a vein is seen.

And upon this one, both his feet did rest, 103
God's Angel, on the threshold throned and still,
Which all of adamant seemed manifest.

Up the three steps and with a right good will 106
My leader drew me, saying, " Now entreat
" To loose the bolt, and thy desire fulfil."

Devout, I threw me at his holy feet, 109
And prayed, for mercy, he would yield the door,
But first three times upon my breast I beat.

Then on my forehead, seven P's did score 112
His sword's point, and "When thou'rt within," said he,
" See that thou cleanse these wounds, and heal them
o'er."

Ashes, or earth, dug out and dry, would be 115
One with the hue which did his vesture stain;
Two keys from 'neath it drew he presently;

And one of silver was, one gold; and then 118
First with the white, then with the yellow's aid,
He made me with the gate content and fain.

CANTO IX

65

" Whenever either of these keys," he said, 121
" Fails in the lock, and will not turn aright,
" This passage opens not, but fast is stayed.

" More precious is the one, but art not slight 124
" And wit, the other needs, the lock to stir,
" Since to unloose the knot it hath the might.

" From Peter hold I them, who bade me err 127
" Rather in opening than in holding fast,
" If only at my feet men prostrate were."

Thereat the sacred entrance-gate, at last 130
He pushed, and said, " Enter, but have no doubt
" Who looks behind, without again is cast."

When in their sockets then they turned about 133
The pivots of that holy portal's door,
Which were of metal resonant and stout,

Tarpeia shewed less harsh and less did roar, 136
Bereft of her Metellus well renowned,
Whereby she afterward remainèd poor.

I turned intent to catch the earliest sound, 139
And, " Te Deum Laudamus " seemed to hear,
From voices with sweet music blent and crowned.

And what I heard did then to me appear, 142
E'en as when people to an organ sing,
And now the words are lost, and now are clear,

When we are held intent on listening. 145

CANTO X

THE closing door rings behind the poets, but Dante, mindful of the warning, looks not back. The cleft through which the pilgrims mount is as tumultuous as the heaving sea, and it is three hours after sunrise ere they issue upon the first terrace, some eighteen feet in breadth, stretching uniformly as far as the eye may reach in either direction. The outer rim of the terrace verges unprotected upon the precipitous downward slope of the mount. The inner side is of marble, cut vertically out of the mountain, and carved with scenes from sacred and pagan history, illustrative of humility, seeming to live and speak in their beautiful and compelling reality. As Dante is gazing unsatiated upon the intaglios, Virgil bids him look to the left, where he beholds strange objects approaching him, which his eyes cannot at first disentangle, but which presently reveal themselves as human forms bent under huge burdens of stone, crumpled up in postures of agonised discomfort. These are the forms of the proud, mere *larvae* not yet developed into the angelic *imago*, who had none the less exalted themselves on earth in unseasonable pride, and now wail only that the limits of their strength enable them to bear no more and bend no lower in their humility.

When we had passed the threshold of the gate
Which souls of men from evil love doth wean,
Because it makes the crooked way seem straight,

Clanging, I heard it shut, but had I seen,
Turning to look thereon with eager eyes,
What fit excuse for such a fault had been?

Through a cleft rock thenceforward must we rise, 7
Where one side and the other moving were,
E'en as a wave rolls in, then backward dies.

" Here it behoves us with some skill to fare," 10
Began my leader, " so that we keep close
" To the receding side, now here, now there."

And hence such limit to our steps arose, 13
That the moon's waning orb regained its bed,
To yield itself once more to its repose,

Ere from that needle's eye our course was sped; 16
But when we climbed to freer space at last
(Where the mount, being set back, leaves space to
tread),

I, wearied out as to our road, held fast 19
In doubtfulness; on level ground stood we
More lone than tracks that traverse deserts vast.

From where its edge o'er the abyss hung free 22
To foot of that high bank which sheer ascended,
Three times the measure of a man would be;

And far as flight of mine eyes wings extended, 25
Now on the left, now on the right hand side,
Such seemed the cornice wheresoe'er it wended.

Our feet upon it we had not yet tried, 28
When I perceived that circling bank, so sheer
That power to mount thereby was all denied,

Was of white marble, and adornèd clear 31
With sculpture, whence what Polycletus wrought,
And even Nature, might to shame come near.

The angel who to earth the message brought, 34
Which from the ban of old set Heaven free,
Decreeing peace, so long with tears besought,

Before us, all so vivid, noted we, 37
Carven, in mien such graciousness conveying
It seemed that no dumb image it could be.

One would have sworn that "Ave," he was saying,
For she was imaged there, who to lay wide 41
The love divine did turn the key withstaying :

And in her attitude were signified 43
The words, "Ecce ancilla Dei," so
As will a figure stamped on wax abide.

"Not on one place alone thy mind bestow," 46
Said my dear master, who on that side where
Man's heart is placed, guidance to me did show ;

Wherefore I moved mine eyes about, and there 49
Saw behind Mary, on that side whereat
He was, who thus had urged me in his care,

Another story in the rock wall set; 52
Wherefore I crossed past Virgil, and drew near,
That to my sight it should show clearer yet.

CANTO X

69

Carved in the very marble, did appear 55
The sacred ark with car and oxen bringing,
Whence duty not entrusted us we fear.

In front were people and the ark enringing 58
With seven choirs, who, of two senses, made
The one say " No," the other, " Yea, they're singing."

Likewise the incense smoke that was displayed 61
In image there, at once the eyes and nose,
With yes and no, in opposite camps arrayed.

Before the blessèd vessel girded goes 64
Dancing, the psalmist lowly minded, thus
Both more and less than king, therein he shows:

At a great palace window fronting us
Michal was imaged, as a woman who
Looks on, sorrowful and contemptuous.

From where I stood, I moved my feet a few 70
Paces, to see another history,
Which behind Michal shone with whiteness new.

There was recorded all the glory high 73
Of the Roman Prince, for whom the worth he wore
Moved Gregory to his great victory.

I speak of Trajan the great Emperor; 76
And at his bridle did a widow stand
Whose image told of tears and sorrow sore;

And round about him was a trampling, and 79
A throng of horse, and eagles wrought of gold
Visibly moved to the wind, above the band.

The wretched woman, 'mid all these, behold 82
Appeared to say; " Lord, give me vengeance now!
" Such grief for my dead son, my heart doth hold."

And he to answer her, " But tarry thou 85
" Till I return." Said she, " My lord," as one
To whom no respite will her grief allow,

" If thou return not? " " He shall see it done, 88
" Who'll hold my place; " and she, " What profits thee
" Another's virtue, if thine own thou shun? "

Then he; " Be comforted, perforce I see 91
" My duty must I do, before I go;
" Justice demands, and pity holdeth me."

He Who no new thing ever saw, e'en so 94
Achieved this visible speech, new to our sight
Because 'tis never found on earth below.

Whilst I rejoiced thus greatly that I might 97
These images of humbleness survey,
Whose Craftsman made their value infinite,

" Behold a throng of folk, that hither stray 100
" Yet make few steps," the poet said, " these men
" To the high staircase shall direct our way."

Mine eyes which were intent to gaze, since fain 103
They were to see new wonders, surely made
But small delay in turning tow'rd him then.

I would not, reader, thou shouldst be afraid 106
At a good purpose, though thou come to hear
How God's Will ordereth that the debt be paid;

Heed not the form the torment here doth wear, 109
Think on what follows, think that at the worst
At the great Judgment it must disappear.

" Master, that which I see," I spoke the first, 112
" Move tow'rd us, seemeth not like men to be
" Yet what it is eludes mine eyes ill-versed."

" Their very grievous lot," he answered me, 115
" Their torment, makes them so to earth incline,
" That first mine eyes strove all in vain to see;

" But clearly look, thy sight shall disentwine, 118
" What comes beneath these stones; already how
" Each beats his breast, is clear to eyes like thine."

O ye proud Christians! wretched weary now, 121
Who, in the vision of your minds unhealed,
Your confidence in backward steps avow!

That we are worms, lo! is it not revealed? 124
Born to become the angelic butterfly,
Flying to judgment without any shield?

Why doth your spirit soar aloft so high, 127
Since as imperfect insects must ye stay,
As grubs, whose form doth uncompleted lie?

E'en as a figure, as a corbel, may 130
Be seen, a roof supporting or a ceiling,
Whose breast is joined unto its knees alway;

(Which all unreal, natheless breeds a feeling 133
Of real misery in him who sees,) such stress
When I gave heed, were these to me revealing.

True is it, they were bended more or less 136
As more or less upon their backs they bore,
And he whose mien most patience did confess,

Weeping, appeared to say; "I can no more." 139

CANTO XI

THE humbled souls approach, with a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer upon their lips, the petition for protection against temptation being uttered for the sake of those they have left behind, whether on earth or, perhaps, in the anti-purgatory, since souls inside the gate are beyond its reach; which loving offices of prayer the living should surely reciprocate for those who are now purging themselves. In answer to Virgil's inquiry, one of the souls directs the pilgrims to turn to the right, circling the mount with the sun. It is the Sienese Umberto, whose insolence had made him little better than a brigand, and had involved all his race in ruin. As the poet bends down to hearken, another soul, painfully turning beneath his burden, gazes upon Dante who recognises him as the miniature painter, Oderisi, now willing to admit the superior excellence of his rival Franco, and fully sensible of the empty and transitory nature of human glory. Cimabue's school of painting is superseded by Giotto's; the older poetic school of Guittone, or Guido, of Arezzo and his companions has been superseded by that of Guido Guinicelli, to which Guido Cavalcanti and Dante himself belong; and who knows whether the founder of yet another school that shall relegate them all to obscurity, may not already be born! Worldly reputation is always of the same empty quality, though the momentary object to which it attaches itself changes, one empty reputation differing from another only in name, and all of them swallowed up in the course of years, what matter whether few or many! One of the heroes of Montaperti and victims of Colle de Valdelsa, who is pacing before them, is already all but forgotten on the very scene of his triumphs and defeats, What are his reputation and his pride to him

now, where the only act of his life that avails him is his self-humiliation in begging ransom for his friend, in the market place of Siena? an act which Dante himself shall learn better to appreciate in the days of his own anguish of humiliation.

“ Our Father, Who in Heaven dost abide,
“ Not stayed therein, but through love’s greater glow
“ Which to Thy primal works is ne’er denied,

“ Unto Thy name and worth may praises flow 4
“ From all created things, the gratefulness
“ Which unto Thy sweet effluence we owe.

“ Let now Thy kingdom’s peace our souls possess, 7
“ For of ourselves, howe’er our wit may strain,
“ We reach it not, except it come to bless.

“ E’en as ‘ Hosanna ’ singing, glad and fain, 10
“ Thine angels sacrifice to Thee their will,
“ So be it done with all the wills of men.

“ Give us this day our daily manna still; 13
“ Who lacks it, goes through this rough wilderness
“ Backward, though toiling with his utmost skill.

“ And as we do forgive the trespasses 16
“ Of men, heed not how poor our merits show,
“ But oh! forgive us, in Thy graciousness.

“ Put not to proof against the ancient foe 19
“ Our virtue, which so lightly falls away,
“ But save us from him who torments it so,

“ Dear Lord, this final prayer we do not pray 22
“ Now for ourselves, since need for us is none,
“ But e’en for those who yet behind us stay.”

Those shades, thus praying that good speed be won 25
For them and us, moved onward neath the weight,
Like that which oft in dream is undergone,

Weary, in anguish disproportionate, 28
All round along the first of cornices,
Where foul mists of the world, being purged, abate.

If help for us is aye implored by these, 31
What can be said and done for them again,
By those whose will rooted in goodness is?

Truly we ought to aid them wash the stain 34
They have borne hence, so that all pure and light
They may go forth and starry spheres attain.

“ Ah! so may justice soon, and pity unite 37
“ So to unload you, that ye spread the wing
“ To lift you, as your longing is, for flight;

“ Show us which side most speedily shall bring 40
“ Us to the stair; if more than one ye know
“ Tell us, which with least steepness doth upspring;

“ Since to climb up, he who with me doth go, 43
“ Because of weight of Adam’s flesh still laid
“ Upon him, much against his will, is slow,”

- It was not manifest, who 'twas that made 46
Among them answer to the words, which he
Whom I was following had thuswise said;
- But 'twas replied, " To the right hand come ye 49
" With us along the bank, so shall be shown
" The pass, which by one living, scaled can be.
- " And but that I am hindered by this stone 52
" Which tameth my proud neck, and so doth give
" Me need alway to hold my visage down,
- " I would look at this man, who still doth live, 55
" Unnamed, and if I know him, to this weight
" To make him pitiful, in truth I'd strive.
- " Latin I was, born of a Tuscan great; 58
" Guglielmo Aldobrandesco; I know not
" If e'er his name was known within your state.
- " From ancient blood and gallant deeds well wrought
" By ancestors, such pride in me did dwell, 62
" I, to our common mother, gave no thought;
- " But scorned all men, so far that it befell 64
" I died thereof, as the Sienese know,
" And every Campagnatic child can tell.
- " Humbert I am; and pride doth hurt bestow 67
" Not only upon me; these too it hath
" Dragged to mischance and hath like me laid low,

CANTO XI

77

“ Therefore till God be satisfied, beneath 70
 “ This weary load I labour, since amid
 “ The living I refused it, here in death.”

Listening to him, I had bent down my head, 73
 And one of them, not he who spake, near by
 Writhed 'neath the weight that so encumberèd,

And saw and knew me, and began to cry, 76
 And as I moved beside them all bent down,
 He strove to scan my features eagerly.

I said “ Wert not as Oderisi known? 79
 “ Honour of Gubbio, honour of that art,
 “ Illuminating called, in Paris town.”

“ Brother,” said he, “ more pleasure do impart 82
 “ The leaves by Franco Bolognese painted;
 “ All honour now is his, and mine in part.

“ Whilst yet I lived, truly should I have scanted 85
 “ This courtesy, because of the great desire
 “ All to excel, wherewith my heart was tainted.

“ The payment for such pride doth God require; 88
 “ And even here I should not be, unless
 “ With pow'r to sin, to God I had drawn nigh'r.

‘ Vain glory of all human mightiness! 91
 ‘ How short a time the summit keepeth green,
 “ E'en if rude ages fail thereon to press!

- " In painting Cimabue well might ween 94
" He held the field, now Giotto hath the cry,
" So that the former's fame obscured hath been.
- " E'en so the glory of our tongue is by 97
" Guido from Guido ta'en; perchance behind
" Comes one who'll chase both nestlings presently.
- " For earthly fame is but a breath of wind, 100
" Now blowing here, now there, changing its name
" Because a changed direction it may find.
- " If old thou strip thy flesh off, shall thy fame 103
" Be greater, than if thou hadst chanced to die
" Ere end was made of pap and infant's game,
- " In a thousand years? Which to eternity 106
" Is far more short, than to the slowest wheel
" In Heaven turned, the twinkling of an eye.
- " All Tuscany once rang as with a peal 109
" From him who 'fore me takes the road so slow,
" Yet whispers now scarce through Siena steal,
- " Where governed he, when down to death must go
" The rage of Florence, who as haughty was 113
" Then, as she now must all degraded show.
- " Your glory is as is the hue of grass, 115
" Which comes and goes, and he through whom it
" springs,
" Green from the earth, makes it to fade and pass."

And I; " A good humility now brings 118
" Thy truth unto my heart, and swelling pride
" It withers; but of whom are said these things? "

" 'Tis Provenzan Salvani," he replied; 121
" And he is here, since in his haughty fist
" He thought to grasp Siena's countryside.

" Thus hath he gone, and goeth without rest 124
" Since that he died; such coin he has to pay
" Who yonder swells with daring pride his breast."

And I; " If spirits who ere yet they may . 127
" Repent, await the verge of Life, anon
" Abide below, nor hither find their way,

" (Except good prayers aid) until hath gone 130
" As much of time as they have lived, what grace
" For him, his coming hither, surely won? "

He said; " When he with glory ran life's race, 133
" He laid by shame, and stood before all men
" Of free-will, in Siena's market-place;

" And there to free his friend from all the pain 136
" That he in Charles's prison sufferèd,
" He brought himself to tremble every vein.

" No more I tell; and darkly this is said, 139
" I know; but soon thy neighbour's acts shall more
" Enable it to be interpretèd.

" This deed from those confines set wide the door." 142

CANTO XII

DANTE has bent down in a sympathetic attitude of humility to converse with Oderisi, and when Virgil bids him make better speed he straightens his person so far as needful to comply, but still remains bowed down in heart, shorn of his presumptuous thoughts. As he steps forward with a good will, Virgil bids him once more look down at the pavement which he is treading, and there he sees as it were the lineaments of the defeated proud, from Lucifer and Briareus to Cyrus and Holofernes and Troy. The proud are laid low upon the pavement as the humble were exalted to the upspringing mountain side. A wide stretch of the mountain is circled ere they come to the gentle angel of this terrace of the proud, whose glory is tempered as a morning star, and who promises them an easier ascent henceforth. A stroke of his wing touches the poet's brow, who then approaches such a stair as was made to ease the ascent to San Miniato in the good old days when weights and measures were true and public records ungarbled. As they mount the stair the blessing of the poor in spirit falls on their ears, with sound how different from the wild laments of Hell! And Dante notes how the steep ascent seems far more easy than the level terrace of a moment back. It is because the P of pride was erased by the stroke of the angel's wing, and thereon all the other six became shallower. This Dante, at a hint from Virgil, ascertains by feeling his brow with outspread fingers, and in innocent delight at the discovery of the cause of his lightened steps, he looks into Virgil's face which answers with a smile of sympathy and encouragement.

With equal step as oxen yoked will pace,
I went beside that heavy laden one,
As far as my sweet teacher gave me grace.

But when he said; " Leave him, and hasten on, 4
" For here 'tis well, that with both sail and oar,
" Speed for his ship by every man be won; "

Erect and apt for walking, I once more 7
Made me in body, though remained my thought
Bowed down and humbled as it was before.

I had advanced and willingly had sought 10
My master's steps to follow, and we two
Already showed light feet to swiftness wrought,

When he said to me, " Good to thee 'twill do 13
" Downward to turn thine eyes, 'twill ease thy way,
" The bed beneath thy feet with care to view."

As to persuade their memory to stay, 16
Tombs on the earth will bear above their dead
The semblance of them in their living day,

Whence oft by many men will tears be shed, 19
Through the sharp pricking of remembrances,
Which only spur the souls for pity made;

So saw I carved in better semblances, 22
Through greater craftsman's skill, the roadway all
As far as from the mount its distance is.

- On one side, him whom Power Imperial 25
More noble made than all created, I
Saw down from heaven, like the lightning fall;
- Saw on the other side Briareus lie 28
Heavy upon the earth, in death's first chill,
Pierced by the bolt from Heaven's armoury.
- I saw Thymbraeus; Mars and Pallas still 31
Full armed, and viewing at their father's side
The giant's limbs, scattered by their fierce will.
- Nimrod, as one bewildered, I descried 34
At foot of his great work, intent to see
The people who in Shinar shared his pride.
- And with what weeping eyes, ah! Niobe 37
I saw thee, graven on the roadway plain,
With sev'n slain children either side of thee!
- O Saul, how clearly on thine own sword slain 40
Thou showed'st on Gilboa's mount, which ne'er
Thereafter felt upon it dew or rain!
- O mad Arachne! so I saw thee there 43
Already half a spider, full of woe
Upon the strands which cost thy pride so dear.
- Nought Rehoboam, does thine image show 46
Of threatening now, but trembling and afraid,
Flies in a chariot ere the chase shall grow.

CANTO XII

83

And yet again the pavement hard displayed, 49
How dearly for the unlucky ornament,
Unto her son Alcmaeon's mother paid.

And how within the shrine, on murder bent, 52
Sennacherib's sons fell on their father; how
They left him dead, and from the temple went.

Ruin and cruel death showed clear enow 55
Made by Tomyris, who to Cyrus said,
" Bloodthirsty one, with blood I sate thee now! "

It showed how in a broken rout they fled, 58
Th' Assyrians, when Holofernes slain
They knew; it showed the relics of the dead.

In ashes and in ruins Troy was plain; 61
O Ilion, the image shown of thee
How poor the thing it pictured, and how vain!

Master of brush or chisel, who was he, 64
Who in that place such shades and features drew
As any subtle wit would stare to see?

Dead seemed the dead, living the living too, 67
And he who saw the fact whose image there
Stooping, I trod on, saw it not more true.

Now grow in pride, with haughty visage fair, 70
Children of Eve, nor your looks downward cast,
Lest of your evil path ye grow aware!

- Already more of the mountain we had passed 73
Circling, and more of the Sun's path was spent,
Than had the mind perceived, still holden fast,
- When he, who watchful e'er, before me went, 76
Began, "Lift up thy head, no time is this
"To go thus all absorbed, and so intent.
- "See there an angel, who now ready is 79
"To meet us; see the day's sixth handmaiden
"Returning homeward, from her services.
- "Show reverence in thy face and bearing then, 82
"That he may send us upward with good will;
"Think that this day will never dawn again."
- Well used I'd grown to do his bidding still, 85
So that no time was lost, and speaking thus
His speech was clear and easy to fulfil.
- The creature fair, white clad, drew nigh to us, 88
And o'er his countenance a light was shed
As from a star at dawn-tide tremulous.
- His arms he opened, then his wings outspread, 91
And "Come, the steps are near; the rocky wall
"Here easily is mounted up," he said.
- How few they are who come to such a call! 94
O sons of men, born to soar upward, why
At any breath of wind, needs must ye fall?

CANTO XII

85

He led us where the rock was cut near by, 97
Then beat his wings upon my brow, and so
Promised a journey of security.

As on the right hand up the mount to go, 100
Where across Rubaconte standeth fair
The Church, which wards the sober town below,

The steep ascent is broken here and there 103
By steps, hewn out in times of ancient date,
When safe the records and the measures were;

So easier here the bank was, though the gate 106
On either side was fenced with rocks, that fell
From the next ledge, precipitous and straight.

And as we thither turned with right good will, 109
"Beati pauperes spiritu," I heard,
More sweetly sung than mortal speech can tell.

Ah me! what different sounds these passes guard 112
Than those of Hell; here enter we through song,
And there below, through wailings fierce and hard.

Now mounted we the blessed stairs along, 115
And to myself I seemed more light to spring
Than on the plain, the souls of pride among,

Whence I; "O Master, say, what heavy thing 118
"Has been ta'en from me, so that as I stride
"I scarcely feel the toil of journeying?"

He answered; " When the P's that yet abide 121
" Though near extinguished on thy face, shall be
" Erased as is the one, whose print has died,

" So vanquished by good will thy feet thou'lt see, 124
" That not alone no weariness they'll know,
" But keen delight upward to carry thee."

Then did I as those do, who as they go 127
Something unknown do carry on the head,
Until another's gesture makes doubt grow,

Wherefore the hand to make more sure, lends aid, 130
And seeks and finds, to do those offices
Which by the sight cannot be furnishèd.

And with my right hand fingers spread, of these 133
Letters, I found but six, carven erstwhile
Upon my brow by th' angel of the keys;

And looking on me did my Leader smile. 136

CANTO XIII

THE poets mount to the second terrace; of dark rock, tenantless so far as the eye can stretch, and without mark or indication of any kind. Virgil apostrophises the sun, and in lack of any counter reason, determines to follow him from east to west. After a time voices ring through the air in praise of generosity, the virtue counter to envy; and Virgil anticipates the direct warning against that vice ere they leave this the circle of its purification. Meanwhile they encounter the once envious spirits, appealing with full confidence to the ungrudging love of Mary, of the angels, and of the saints. The envious eyes that once found food for bitterness in all sights of beauty and joy, must now in penance refrain from drinking in the gladness of sea and sky and human love, for the lids are drawn together with such a suture of wire as is used to tame the wildness of the untrained hawk; and their inward darkness is matched by their sober raiment. They lean one against another in mutual love and for mutual support, and upturn their sightless countenances like the blind beggars that gather round church portals. Dante is shamed, as though he were taking ungenerous advantage of those whom he sees but who cannot know his presence; and, having gained Virgil's leave, addresses the souls in words of soothing beauty and aspiration. In answer to his question whether any of them are of Latium, Sapia the Siennese, tells that they are all citizens of one true city; but that she, amongst others, had lived in her earthly pilgrimage in Latium. She tells the story of her evil joy at the defeat of the Siennese by the Florentines at Colle in Valdelsa, and utters her thanks to the humble saint whose prayers have secured her admission to expiatory suffering earlier than the else appointed time.

In her turn Sapia questions Dante as to his journey,—with open eyes as she judges, and with breath-formed speech,—around this circle; and he answers that he too shall one day have his eyes closed there, but not for long, since he has sinned far less through envy than through pride. He further reveals to her the wonder of his pilgrimage and receives her petition for his own prayers, and her commission to bear news of her to her kinsfolk among the vain and light-minded Sienese.

Now to the summit of that stair we came,
Where is cut back a second time the hill,
Which, as men mount it, strips their sin from them;

And there a new ledge groweth visible, 4
Binding the mountain like a band, although
Matched with the first, its curves are sharper still.

No shade is there, nor any sculptured show, 7
But dull and livid doth the stone appear
On the bare bank, and the bare path below.

The poet said, " If we should tarry here 10
" Awaiting folk to ask, too long we might
" Perchance delay our choice, I greatly fear."

Then full upon the sun he fixed his sight, 13
And turned the left hand part of him and made
A centre for the movement of his right.

" Sweet light, I take this new path unafraid 16
" Trusting in thee, do thou now lead," said he,
" Even as here within we would be led.

“ The world thou warmest, and it draws from thee 19
“ Its light; our guide must ever be thy ray,
“ If reason urge not to the contrary.”

We followed thence in little time our way, 22
As far as men will count a mile down here,
Since eager will forbade us to delay;

When flying tow’rd us, spirits heard we near, 25
But saw them not, and to Love’s table each
Gave invitation courteous and clear.

The first voice, flying, which our ears might reach, 28
“ Vinum non habent ” said aloud, and then
Behind us went, repeating o’er that speech.

And e’er its sound had died away again 31
Through distance, passed another crying; “ I
Orestes am,” nor would near us remain.

“ Father, what voices are these passing nigh? ” 34
I said; and as I asked, behold a third
That said, “ Love them that use you evilly.”

“ This circle scourges,” came the master’s word, 37
“ The sin of envy; wherefore drawn from Love
“ The whipcords are, even as thou hast heard.

“ The bridle, contrary in sound should prove, 40
“ I think its message will thy hearing thrill
“ Ere through the Pass of Pardon we shall move,

“ Fix yonder steadfast eyes and sure they will 43
“ See folk at rest before us, not a few,
“ And each beside the cliff is seated still.”

Then wider open both mine eyelids grew, 46
I looked in front, and saw shades coverèd
With cloaks, not differing from the stone in hue.

And when a little nearer we had sped, 49
“ O Mary, pray for us,” I heard the cries,
And, “ Michael, Peter and all Saints give aid.”

I cannot think that yet on earth there is 52
A man so hard of heart, that pity should
Not touch him at the sight that met mine eyes;

For when so near to them at length I stood 55
That all their features were to me made clear,
Then through mine eyes rained out my grief renewed.

Clad in coarse haircloth did they all appear, 58
And one his shoulder to the other lent,
And by the bank they all supported were,

E'en as the blind, whose sustenance is spent, 61
At Pardons stand, and beg for what they need,
And o'er the one, another's head is bent,

So that more quickly pity may be freed 64
In others, not from sound of words alone,
But by the sight, which not the less shall plead;

CANTO XIII

91

And as to the blind no profit can be known 67
From sunshine, so where now I spake, by light
Of heav'n no bounty to these shades was shown.

For pierced with thread of iron and drawn tight 70
Were all their eyelids, as is sometimes done
To untamed hawks, that restless still will fight.

I seemed to show them insult going on 73
Seeing them all, myself unseen, which made
Me to my Counsel wise turn back anon.

Well knew he what desire the dumb one had, 76
And therefore waited not my questioning,
But, "Speak then briefly and with point," he said.

Virgil went with me, still continuing 79
That side the cornice, where a man might fall,
Since there no parapet doth it enring;

And on the other side devout were all 82
The shades, who pressed from 'neath the dreadful
seam
The burning tears their cheeks were wet withal.

"O race made sure to see the light supreme," 85
(I turned to them, beginning presently),
"Which is the sole desire of which ye dream,

"So grace may quickly from the scum set free 88
"Your conscience, so that clear throughout it moving,
"Descend once more the stream of memory,

- " Tell me, for gracious will it be and loving, 91
" Is any Latin soul among you; when
" I know him, for his good it may be proving."
- " O brother mine, each is a citizen 94
" Of one true city, but thy speech would say,
" Who lived in Italy, a pilgrim then."
- Meseemed from one beyond where I did stay, 97
This answer came to me, wherefore I made
My voice more heard there, turning more that way.
- Amid the others one expectant shade 100
I saw, and should one ask of me " How so? "
Its chin it raised, as do the blind. I said,
- " Spirit that dost subdue thyself to go 103
" Upward at last, if thou it was replied,
" Thy name and dwelling-place, ah! let me know."
- " I was of Siena, and with these abide 106
" Weeping," she said, " to cleanse my life of sin,
" And that to us God's grace be not denied.
- " Sapient I was not, though called I have been 109
" Sapia, and on others ills was spending
" More joy, than fortune of mine own could win.
- " And lest thou deem that herein is pretending, 112
" Hear if I was as mad as I have said.
" Already was my course of years descending,

- “ When near to Colle were my townsfolk led 115
“ To battle ’gainst their enemies, and I
“ Even for what He willed, to God had prayed;
“ Broken they were, and falling back must try 118
“ The bitter steps of flight; I saw the chase,
“ And joy past all conceiving felt thereby;
“ So that I lifted up my insolent face 121
“ Crying to God, ‘ I fear Thee now no more!’
“ As doth the blackbird for a few fair days.
“ Peace I desired with God, on the last shore 124
“ Of Life, natheless no penitence soe’er
“ Would yet have lessened the great debt I bore,
“ Had not Pietro Pettignano, there 127
“ Been moved by charity to grieve for me,
“ And so remembered me in holy prayer.
“ But who art thou, who, I believe, dost see 130
“ With eyes unsewn, and breathing words dost say,
“ And going, askest what our state may be? ”
“ Yet shall mine eyes,” I said, “ be ta’en away 133
“ Here; but for little space, since small th’ offence
“ They wrought when after envy they did stray.
“ Far greater is the fear, which in suspense 136
“ Holdeth my soul, of that torment beneath;
“ Already weighs me down the load from thence.”

And she, " What guide has hither shewn the path 139

" If that thou thinkest to return below? "

And I, " He who is silent here, he hath;

" And I am living, therefore make me know, 142

" Spirit elect, if 'tis thy will that I

" Yonder, should still about thy service go."

" So new this thing is," said she, " I descry 145

" How God doth love thee, by its token here,

" So aid me with thy prayers, presently.

" And I entreat, by all thou holdest dear, 148

" If e'er the land of Tuscany thou tread,

" That 'mid my kindred, thou my fame shouldst clear.

" Thou'lt see them 'mid the people vainly led 151

" By hope in Talamon; more hope they will

" Lose there, than in Diana's search was shed;

" But there the admirals shall lose more still." 154

CANTO XIV

As Dante converses with Sapia, revealing the wondrous conditions of his own pilgrimage and the mysterious presence of his guide, he is overheard by two spirits who are leaning for support one against another at his right. Nearest to him is Guido del Duca of Bertinoro, who is the chief speaker, the other being Rinieri da Calboli of Forlì. They speak chiefly to each other, but draw Dante into their conversation, questioning him as to his origin; and when he indicates by a circumlocution that his birthplace lies upon the Arno, Rinieri asks Guido why Dante conceals the name under dark hints as though it were a shameful thing; whereon Guido approves of Dante's shrinking from expressly naming this accursed ditch which rises in the midst of brutishness, and as it swirls through deeper pools, finds ever fiercer or more degraded neighbours, till it reaches the crowning infamy of Pisa. There follows a prediction of the woes which Rinieri's relative Fulcieri shall wreak on Florence in 1303. Deeply stirred by their discourse, Dante questions the spirits as to their own past, and Guido accompanies his answer by a lamentation over the degeneracy of the Romandiola from which they both spring; and implores Dante to pass upon his way and leave him to weep undisturbed. Assured that they are pursuing the right way, since the generosity of these once envious souls would else have notified them of their mistake, the two poets pursue their way, as the warning voices against envy, anticipated by Virgil, ring in their ears; to which Virgil adds his sad reflections on the things which human choice relinquishes and the things it grasps.

" Now who is he who circles thus our hill,
" Before that death has given him power to fly,
" Opening his eyes and shutting them at will? "

" I know not, but he goes not lonely by; 4
" Question him thou, who art to him more near,
" And greet him gently, that he may reply."

Upon my right hand thus, two spirits there 7
Conversed of me, one 'gainst the other leant,
Then turned their faces up, to speak more clear;

And said the one: " O soul, that still being pent 10
" Within thy body, tow'rd the heavens dost go,
" For charity console us; be content

" To say whence com'st thou, who thou art, for so 13
" The grace allowed thee sets us marvelling,
" As must a thing that none ere this could know."

" In Falterona doth a streamlet spring," 16
I said, " and flows through midst of Tuscany,
" One hundred miles no end to it doth bring.

" I bring this body from its banks; 'twould be 19
" To speak in vain, my lineage to tell,
" Since little yet resounds the name of me."

" If with my mind I pierce thy meaning well," 22
The one, who first had spoken, answered then,
" It is the name of Arno thou wouldst spell."

- “ Why did he hide,” the other spake again, 25
“ The river’s name, as men are wont to do
“ Of things too dreadful to be spoken plain? ”
- “ I know not,” thus the shade responded, who 28
Was questioned of the thing, “ but meet it is
“ That valley’s name should perish, through and
through;
- “ For from its opening (where the ruggedness 31
“ Whence is Pelorus sundered, shows far more
“ Fertility than many fair countries),
- “ As far as where it yieldeth, to restore 34
“ That which the sky sucks up from out the sea,
“ Whence rivers gain the rushing floods they pour,
- “ Virtue is driven forth, an enemy 37
“ To all, as were it a snake, or by mischance
“ Of place or by ill custom’s enmity;
- “ The dwellers in the wretched valley, thence 40
“ Have changed their natures, till ’twould almost seem
“ That Circe had them in her pasture’s fence.
- “ ’Mid brutish hogs, more worthy one would deem 43
“ Of acorns, than of any food for men,
“ It first directs its poor thin thread of stream,
- “ And coming downwards, curs discovers then 46
“ Whose pow’r is less than is their snarling hate,
“ And turns its snout from them in high disdain.

- " This fosse accurst and all unfortunate 49
" Down plunges, and so finds, the more it grows,
" More dogs, that into wolves change their estate.
- " Through other deep ravines downward it flows, 52
" And finds the foxes, with such fraud fulfilled,
" That they fear not the wit of any foes.
- " Although another hear me, yet unstilled 55
" My speech shall be, 'tis well he should recall
" The prophecy, a spirit true hath willed.
- " I see thy grandson as a hunter fall 58
" Upon those wolves, and by the fierce stream drive,
" And fill with terror deep the hearts of all.
- " He sells their flesh whilst yet they are alive, 61
" Like worn-out cattle; from a multitude
" Takes life, himself of honour doth deprive.
- " Bloody he issues from the stricken wood; 64
" He leaves it so that not a thousand year
" Can cause its former state to be renewed."
- As troubled grows the face of who shall hear 67
Grievous calamity foreshadowèd
From whereso'er the peril draweth near,
- So then I saw the other soul (who had 70
Turned round to listen), once it had received
These words, grow troubled and exceeding sad.

CANTO XIV

99

Desire to know their names I then conceived, 73
From speech of one and face o' the other wrought,
And question then with prayers to them I weaved;

Wherefore the soul, who first my word had sought, 76
Began: "Thy will is I should stoop for thee
"To do the thing which thou for us wilt not;

"But since God wills His grace so gloriously 79
"Should shine in thee, I'll scant not thy desire;
"Guido del Duca, therefore, know in me.

"My blood with envy was so set on fire, 82
"That livid thou hadst seen my face to grow,
"To think that gladness should a man inspire.

"I reap this straw, since I such seed did sow, 85
"O race of men, why doth your heart abide
"There, where companionship ye cannot know?

"Rinier this is; this is the crown and pride 88
"Of the Calboli house, whereto an heir
"Of his great worth hath ever been denied.

"And not alone his blood is reft and bare, 91
"Twixt Po and the hills and Reno and the seas,
"Of good that truth and chivalry should share,

"For all is filled within these boundaries 94
"With poisonous plants, so truly 'twould be slow
"By husbandry to try to uproot these.

- “ Ye Romagnols, to bastards turned, O show 97
“ Where Lizio, Guido di Carpigna be,
“ Pier Traversar’, Mainardi Arrigo.
- “ When shall Bologna e’er a Fabbro see 100
“ Again, Faenza e’er a Bernardin
“ Di Fosco, noble shoot from lowly tree?
- “ Wonder not, Tuscan, if I weep, now when 103
“ Guido da Prata I remember, and
“ With him our co-mate, Azzo’s Ugolin;
- “ Federico Tignoso and his band, 106
“ The Traversaran house, that lacks an heir,
“ The Anastagi who like fated stand;
- “ The knights and ladies, toils and sports, which there
“ Where hearts are now so evil grown, the might 110
“ Of love and courtesy to us made dear.
- “ O Brettinoro, why delays thy flight, 112
“ Since that thy household all and many an one
“ Have left the land, lest guilt their lives should blight?
- “ Well does Bagnacaval to have no son; 115
“ But Castrocaro ill, Conio worse,
“ Not the begetting of such counts to shun;
- “ Well shall the Pagani do, when once their curse, 118
“ Their demon, goes; yet testimony pure
“ None to their memory shall e’er rehearse.

" O Ugolin de' Fantolin, secure 121

" Thy name is, since now is no expectation

" Of one whose fall should make it grow obscure.

" But go thy way now, Tuscan, consolation 124

" For me lies more in tears than speaking, since

" Discourse hath wrung me to such tribulation."

We knew that they could hear us going thence, 127

Those souls so dear, wherefore their silence made

Our spirits in our road have confidence.

As solitary on our road we sped, 130

Like lightning when through air it cleaves its way

A voice against us smote, and lo! it said:

" Whoever findeth me shall surely slay," 133

And fled, as sound of thunder vanishing,

If bursts a cloud which erst above us lay.

And when our ears had truce from listening, 136

Behold, another crashing sentence thrown

At us, like thunder quickly following:

" I am Aglauros who became a stone;" 139

And then to press near to the poet, I

Stepped back, not forward. Now the air had grown

Quiet on every side, and presently 142

He said unto me: " That was the stern bit,

" Which ought to hold man where due limits lie.

" But ye still snatch the bait, and hooked by it, 145

" Drawn are ye to the enemy of old,

" Whence lure or bridle matters not a whit.

" The heav'ns call to you round about you rolled, 148

" Showing you their eternal loveliness,

" But only things of earth your eyes behold;

" So the All-Seeing sends on you distress." 151

CANTO XV

It is three o'clock in the afternoon, and the poets (having circled nigh a fourth part of the mountain and reached its northern slope) are facing the westering sun, when the dazzling light of the angel guardian of the circle warns them that they have approached the next ascent. They are welcomed to a stair far less steep than those they have already surmounted, and hear the blessing of the merciful, together with songs of lofty encouragement, chanted behind them as they mount. Dante's mind goes back to words in which Guido del Duca, while confessing his own envious disposition on earth, had reproached mankind for fixing their hearts on the things which exclude partnership; and now he questions Virgil as to the meaning of this saying. Virgil answers first briefly, and then in full detail, that the more of any material thing one man has, the less of it there is for others; whereas the more peace or knowledge or love one man has, the more there is for all the others. Hence envy disturbs men's hearts only because they are fixed on material instead of spiritual things. If this exposition does not satisfy him, let him await further light from Beatrice, and meanwhile let him make all speed upon his journey. On this day they reach the third terrace — that of the wrathful — whereon Dante in ecstatic vision beholds examples of meekness and patience. Waking, half bewildered, from his trance, he is called to himself by Virgil, and the two walk toward the evening sun, till a dark cloud of smoke rolling towards them, plunges them into the blackness of more than night.

As much as, 'twixt the earliest of the day
And third hour's ending, showeth of that sphere
Which ever like a little child doth play,

So much remaining did by now appear 4
Of the sun's course tow'rd eventide and night;
'Twas vespers there, and deepest midnight here.

Full on our faces smote the level light, 7
For so far circled was the mount by us,
That straight toward the west our course was dight,

When splendour greater and more glorious 10
Than e'er before, weighed down my brow, until
Wonder at unknown things grew tyrannous;

Wherefore I raised my hands, and held them still 13
Above my eyes, making thereby the shade,
Which seeks excessive power of light to quell.

As when a light, by glass or water stayed, 16
Back leaping whence it came, makes its ascent
At the like angle to the one it made

Descending, and an equal space is bent 19
From the straight line made by a falling stone,
As science teaches and experiment;

So I seemed smitten by a light back thrown 22
From somewhere close before me, till mine eyes
Were swiftly driven their defeat to own.

" Sweet Father, what is that, whence in nowise 25
" Can I prevail," I said, " my sight to shield,
" Which seems to move tow'rd where our pathway lies?"

" Marvel not," said he, " that thine eyes must yield
" To heaven's household still; a herald this 29
" By whom the stair to climb shall be revealed.

" Soon, to behold such things will surely cease 31
" To weigh on thee, and e'en as nature meant,
" Thou shalt regard them, feeling nought but bliss."

As nearer to the angel blest we went, 34
With joyful voice he said: " Here enter ye
" Less steep than others is the stair's ascent."

Departing thence already, mounted we; 37
" Blest are the merciful," arose the strain,
And, " Thou that overcomest, joyful be."

Master and pupil faced the hillside then 40
Alone, and as we journeyed on, I thought
Some profit from his words I might attain,

And questioning, to learn his mind I sought: 43
" What meant Romagna's spirit, when the word
" ' Companionship ' into his speech he brought? "

Then he: " He knows wherein he chiefly erred, 46
" And all its ill; no wonder then should rise,
" If, to prevent such grief, his wrath be stirred.

" Since all men's longing concentrated lies, 49
" Where partnership makes each one's share the less,
" Envy the bellows is, to waft your sighs.

- “ But if desire were set on loftiness, 52
“ Through love compelling of the highest sphere,
“ No fear like that could hearts of men distress;
- “ For more of good each one possesseth there, 55
“ Where more there are who ‘ ours ’ can say, and more
“ Within that cloister then, love flameth clear.”
- “ Greater, than had I held my peace before, 58
“ My fasting from contentment is,” I said;
“ And greater doubt within my mind I store.
- “ How can it be that good distributed, 61
“ Makes more possessors richer in its worth,
“ Than if a few possess it all instead? ”
- And he: “ Because again on things of earth 64
“ Thou settest all thy mind, thou from true light
“ Bringest alone deep darkness unto birth.
- “ That good, ineffable and infinite, 67
“ That is on high, as fast to love doth speed,
“ As flies a sunbeam to a substance bright.
- “ It gives itself according to the need 70
“ It finds of ardour there, so worth eterne
“ Gives increase e’er beyond love’s utmost need.
- “ The more on high who understanding learn, 73
“ The more there are to love, and loving grows,
“ When each like glass reflects on each in turn.

“ And if my words still not thy hunger’s throes, 76
“ Thou’lt look on Beatrice, who’ll set thee free
“ From this and all desires thy being knows.

“ Strive only that ere long thy five wounds be 79
“ Erased, which only through our sorrow heal,
“ Even as are the other two on thee.”

And as I was about to say, “ I feel 82
Content,” we reached the higher circle, where
I spake not, for the eager eyes appeal.

And in ecstatic vision seemed I there 85
Suddenly caught, and to a temple sped,
Wherein of many folk I grew aware,

And of a woman entering, who said, 88
With tender gestures of a mother: “ Son,
“ Why hast thou on us such a burden laid?

“ Thy father, lo! and I have sought thee, lone 91
“ And sorrowing; ” and as she ceased to speak,
What first appeared there vanished and was gone.

And then another came, adown whose cheek 94
Flowed waters such as grief distilleth, when
Great anger in one maketh it outbreak.

And said: “ If thou art ruler o’er these men, 97
“ Whose city’s name made gods contend of old,
“ City whence knowledge sparkles clear and fain,

" Take vengeance of those arms so overbold, 100
" Which, O Pisistratus, embraced our child."
Thereat the kind and gentle lord, behold,

Who answered her with face serene and mild: 103
" What shall be done to him who'd work us ill,
" If he who loves us is by us reviled? "

Then saw I men, kindled to angry will, 106
Slaying a youth with stones, and crying loud
To one another, ever: " Kill him, kill! "

And him I saw sinking to earth, and bowed 109
Already 'neath death's burden, but his eyes
As gates to heaven still in death he vowed,

Praying the Lord out of his agonies, 112
With gentle looks that loosen pity's wings,
That He would pardon these his enemies.

When that my soul returned to outward things, 115
Which outside it are true, then soon were clear
My errors, unto which no falseness clings.

My leader, unto whom I did appear 118
As one who shakes sleep off him, therefore said:
" What ails thee, thus ungoverned going here?

" Behold! For more than half a league thou'st sped
" With staggering limbs, veiling thine eyes, as one 122
" Who or by wine or sleep is vanquishèd."

" Sweet Father mine, if thou wilt hear thy son, 124
" I'll tell," I answered, " what I seemed to see,
" When all the mastery of my limbs seemed gone."

And he: " Although upon thy face should be 127
" A hundred masks, thy thoughts however small
" Would not thereby be kept concealed from me.

" Thy vision doth deprive thee now of all 130
" Excuse, from opening thy heart to peace,
" Whose waters from the fount eternal fall.

" ' What ails thee,' asked I not as one who sees 133
" With the eye only, which can see not even
" When from the body wins the soul release;

" I asked that strength should to thy feet be given; 136
" Men who to use the waking hour are slow,
" When it returns, must from their sloth be driven."

Thus onward through the evening did we go, 139
Straining our eyes, as far as we could see,
Against the glory of the sunset glow;

When lo! a smoke, as dark as night could be, 142
Little by little rolling tow'rd us there,
Nor had we room to 'scape its panoply;

Of eyesight this bereft us and pure air. 145

CANTO XVI

CLOSING his eyes against the gross and bitter fog, led by Virgil like a blind man, Dante hears the harmonious and tender chant of the "Lamb of God" arise from the lips of the once wrathful spirits. One of them, who has heard Dante's conversation with Virgil, questions him and turns back with him to hear his wondrous tale. The spirits in other circles have recognised the special grace shown to Dante in his anticipated vision of unseen things; and to this grace Dante himself now appeals to win from his new companion an account of himself, and directions as to the journey; for meeting these souls circling from west to east raises a doubt in his mind whether he and Virgil have been right in still following the sun. The spirit reveals himself as Marco Lombardo, refers, as other spirits had done, to the degeneracy of the times, reassures Dante as to the course he is taking and implores his prayers. Dante, while giving him the required pledge, catches at this renewed insistence on the evil times, and asks whether it is due to unfavourable conjunctions in the heavens or to inherent degeneracy of earth. Marco heaves a deep sigh at the blindness implied in such a question; as if man were handed over helplessly to planetary influences! As if he had no free will and no direct dependence upon God, which may make him superior to all material influences! The causes of degeneracy must be sought on earth and will be found in the absence of any true governor who perceives at least the turrets of the true city, and so can lead the guileless and impressionable souls of men on the right path. And this evil springs not from corruptness of human nature in general, but from the worldliness and ambition of the clergy who have grafted the sword upon the crook, so

CANTO XVI

III

that the two lights of the world that once shone in Rome have quenched each other; and the temporal and spiritual powers, confounded together, have ceased to guide and check each other. Hence the world is so degenerate that only three good old men remain as a rebuke to the living generation. Dante accepts the sad wisdom of Marco's discourse, only requesting a word of personal explanation as to one of the three still surviving types of antique virtue; and thereon he begins to see the light struggle through the enveloping darkness, and is told that the angel guardian of the next stair is at hand.

Darkness of hell, and of a night bereft
Of every planet, 'neath a barren sky
All shadowed o'er by clouds that thickly drift,

Made not so dense a veil unto mine eye, 4
Nor in its texture all so harsh a thing,
As formed that smoke that close on us did lie:

For it forbade the eyes from opening; 7
My wise and trusted escort to my side
Drew close therefore, his shoulder offering.

E'en as a blind man goes behind his guide 10
Lest he should stray, or strike all unaware
'Gainst aught, whence hurt or death might e'en betide;

So went I through that foul and bitter air, 13
Hearkening unto my guide, who often said,
"Lest aught now part thee from me, have a *caré*."

Voices I heard, and all seemed as they prayed 16
Unto the Lamb of God, Who every sin
Taket away, mercy and peace to shed.

With "Agnus Dei," alone did they begin, 19
One word was with them all, one measure clear,
So that all concord seemed 'mid them therein.

"Spirits are these, O! Master, whom I hear?" 22
I said, and he, "Thou apprehendest well,
'To loose the knot of wrath they persevere."

"Now who art thou, cleaving our smoke drift's swell,
'And speaking of us, certainly as though 26
'Thou couldest yet thy time by kalends tell?"

A voice I heard that spoke unto us so; 28
Whereat my master said to me, "Reply,
'And ask if by this way upward we go."

"O creature, that art cleansing thee," said I, 31
'That fair thou may'st return to Him Who made,
'Marvels thou'lt hear, if thou wilt follow nigh."

"Follow I will, far as I may unstayed," 34
He answered, "and if the smoke forbids our sight,
'Hearing shall link us as we need instead."

Then I began, "With all those swathings dight 37
'Which death unbinds, upward I'm journeying,
'And from Hell's agony I take my flight;

- “ And if God in His grace is sheltering 40
“ Me, in that thus He wills I see His court,
“ By ways beyond all man’s imagining,
“ Hide not from me, who, ere Death cut thee short,
“ Thou wert, but tell, and tell me if I go 44
“ Straight to the pass; thy words be our escort.”
“ Lombard I was, and Mark was called below, 46
“ I knew the world, and for that worth had love
“ Where all men now have left unstrung the bow.
“ For mounting upward rightly dost thou move,” 49
So answered he, and added; “ Lo! I pray,
“ Pray thou for me, when thou shalt be above.”
And I to him; “ I bind me by my fay 52
“ To do the thing thou askest, but I fear
“ Lest doubt destroy me, save I give it way.
“ ’Twas simple first, now double doth appear 55
“ From thy discourse, which maketh sure to me
“ That which to it I join elsewhere and here.
“ The world is void in very certainty, 58
“ Even as thy words make clear, of every worth,
“ And heavy ’tis, and masked with villainy,
“ But show, I pray, whence hath the cause its birth,
“ That seeing, I may make others perceive; 62
“ For one sets it in heav’n and one on earth.”

Deep sighing, to "Alas," compressed by grief 64
He breathed, then, "Brother, lo! the world is blind,
"And that thou comest thence, I well conceive.

"Ye who do live, seek every cause to find 67
"In heav'ns above, as though with them they swept
"Perforce, all earthly things of every kind.

"If this were true, free-will were dead and stripped
"From off you, therefore justice were there none, 71
"If man for goodness joyed, for evil wept.

"By heaven are your impulses begun; 73
"I say not all, but if I should, a light
"Ye have to follow good and evil shun,

"And have free-will, which, if its earliest fight 76
"With heaven, it can win, then gains it there
"All victory, if nurtured 'tis aright.

"To greater power, to nature far more fair 79
"Ye, free, are subject; thus into life doth spring
"Your mind, whereof the heavens claim no care.

"So if the present world go wandering 82
"Astray, ye are the cause, from you it groweth,
"Therein a true spy's warning will I bring.

"The little innocent soul that nothing knoweth 85
"Save that, since glad her Maker was, so she
"To that which gives her joy willingly goeth,

- " Comes from His hand, Who loves her tenderly 88
" Ere yet she is, like to a child that plays,
" With tears or laughter, as the mood may be.
- " The taste of some small good first she essays, 91
" Then is beguiled, will after it pursue,
" Save rein doth turn her love or curb withstays.
- " So laws were needful for a curb, so too 94
" A king was needed, that one should be fit
" To see at least the tower of the city true.
- " Law is there, but who sets his hand to it? 97
" Not one; because the shepherd who doth lead
" May chew the cud, but weareth hoofs not split.
- " Since then they see that only where his greed 100
" Is roused, their guide will aim at good, no more
" The people ask but there will also feed.
- " Well canst thou see, that all the cause, wherefor 103
" The world is sinful, is ill leadership,
" Not nature in you corrupted at the core.
- " Rome, that the good world made, was wont to keep
" Two suns, one of the world, one of the Lord, 107
" Whence on both roads, no man need ever trip.
- " One hath the other quenched; joined is the sword
" Unto the crook; together both must steer 110
" An evil course an evil goal toward;

- “ For joined, the one of the other has no fear: 112
“ Since by its seed can every plant be known,
“ If thou believe not, look well at the ear.
- “ Once courtesy and valour both were shown 115
“ Where Po and swift Adige feed the plain,
“ Ere enmity to Frederick had grown;
- “ Now safely may the passage there be ta'en 118
“ By any, whom should very shame withhold
“ From talking with or mingling with good men.
- “ Yet live three sages still, in whom the old 121
“ Age doth rebuke the new; long watch and ward
“ It seems, ere God with better life enfold.
- “ Corrado da Palazzo, good Gherard 124
“ And Guido da Castel, who's better named
“ In the French fashion, the upright Lombard.
- “ Henceforward for the Church of Rome, be't claimed
“ That when confounding the two powers, she fell, 128
“ Her and her load, she hath with mire defamed.”
- “ My Mark,” I said, “ truly thou arguest well, 130
“ And now I see, why Levi's sons were e'er
“ Forbid inheritance, as Scriptures tell.
- “ But who is that Gherardo, who I hear 133
“ Abides, example of a race long spent,
“ Reproof to barbarous times to minister? ”

" Either thy speech deceives me, or doth tempt," 136
He answered; " for though speaking Tuscan, lo!

" Thou seem'st of good Gherardo ignorant.

" No other surname for him do I know, 139

" Save from his daughter, Gaia, I should take.

" God be with you, no further may I go.

" That whiteness see, which through the smoke doth
break 142

" Lightening it; there the angel is, before

" He seeth me, backward my way I'll make."

And so he turned, and would not hear me more. 145

CANTO XVII

As the mists cleave on a mountain side and reveal the prospect, so the cloud that swathed the wrathful opened, and the poets looked on the setting sun, as the shadow of night was already creeping up the slope. Visions of the wrathful, corresponding to the visions of the placable and peaceful already seen, come upon Dante; from which he is awakened by the shining light and the glad summons of the angel of the stair, to whose spontaneous invitation the poets gladly respond. On the first step Dante feels again the stroke of the angel's wing and hears the blessing of the peace-makers. But already, when they reach the summit of the stair, the shadow has passed beyond them, the rays of the sun fall only on the higher reaches of the mount, and in accordance with the law of the place they can rise no higher while night reigns. After listening in vain for any sound in the new circle, Dante questions his guide as to the nature of the offence purged there. Virgil answers that it is sloth, and takes occasion to expound the general system of Purgatory. Not only the Creator, but every creature also, is moved by love. Natural love, as that of heavy bodies for the centre, of fire for the circumference, or of plants for their natural habitat, is unerring; but rational love may err by being misdirected; or by being disproportionate, by defect or excess. Love directed to primal and essential good, or to secondary good in due measure, cannot lead to sin; but perverse and disproportioned love is the seed of all sin, just as much as rightly directed and measured love is the seed of all virtue. A human being who has not become a monster cannot love (that is, cannot be drawn towards and take delight in) evil to himself or evil to the God on whom his very being depends. All perverse rejoicing, then, must be

rejoicing in the ill of our neighbour, and this may be caused by pride, envy, or anger, which are purged on the three circles already passed. Apart from these evil gratifications, every one has at least some confused apprehension of a supreme good wherein the soul can rest, and every one therefore seeks to gain it. But this supreme love, which is no other than the love of God, may err by defect, either speculative or practical; and the slothful who have thus erred recover their lost tone in the circle the pilgrims have now reached. The innocent or needful enjoyment of which the bodily frame is the seat, cannot confer true bliss and may be pursued with disproportionate keenness, or in neglect of the divinely imposed restraints. Such sins are purged in the three uppermost circles.

Reader, if ever 'mid the Alps did roll
Mists over thee, such that thou sawest thence
The world around, as through his skin the mole,

Remember, when the vapours moist and dense 4
Began to melt away, how the sun's sphere
Feebly at length entered thy vision's sense;

Then to thy fancy lightly will appear, 7
In what a way I saw the sun again,
Who was already to his setting near.

So with the trusty steps, by my lord ta'en, 10
Equalling mine, from such a cloud I passed,
To rays already dead on the shore's low plain.

O! fantasy, that ofttimes sweeps us fast 13
So far from self, we cease to be aware,
Though thousandfold there sound a trumpet blast,

What moves thee if the senses bring nought there? 16
Light moves, self shaped within the heavenly place,
Or shaped by a will whereof 'tis messenger.

In my imagination loomed the trace 19
Of her impiety, who transformed, gained
The shape of the bird most glad of singing's grace.

Within itself my mind was so restrained, 22
That from the outer world there came not aught
Of all to which its vision then attained.

Then to my lofty fantasy was brought 25
One crucified, proud and disdainful he
In mien, and in such guise with death he fought.

Ahasuerus great was near to see, 28
Esther his bride, and Mordecai upright,
Who spoke and wrought with such integrity.

And as this vision broke and took to flight 31
E'en of itself as doth a bubble, when
The water fails 'neath which it sprang to sight,

A weeping maiden rose to vision plain, 34
Who said 'mid bitter tears, " O Queen who sought
" To keep Lavinia, lo! thyself art slain.

" Why hast thou willed that wrath bring thee to
nought? 37

" Now thou hast lost me; Mother, yet I stay
" Grieving at thine, more than at others lot."

CANTO XVII

121

As sleep is broken, when a new light may
Suddenly strike upon the closèd eyes,
Yet broken, quivers ere it dies away;

My fancy fell to earth in such a wise, 43
When on my face a light fell mightily,
Greater than any that on earth arise.

I turned about to see where I might be, 46
When, "Here the ascent is," said a voice, whereon
All other intent vanished utterly;

Thence by my will such eagerness was won 49
To see who 'twas that spake, as doth not rest
Till face to face it stands, its striving done.

But as the sun, whereby is sight oppressed 52
By overplus of light, himself concealeth,
So here my failing worth left me distressed.

" This is a spirit divine, who now revealeth 55
" The upward road to us, before we cry,
" And with his light himself from vision stealeth.

" He serves us as man serves himself thereby, 58
" For he who sees the need, yet waits the pray'r,
" Already thinks unkindly to deny.

" Now move we tow'rd this invitation fair, 61
" Make effort to ascend, ere dies the day,
" For then we cannot, while the dark is there."

So said my leader, and to that stairway, 64
Together with him sought I out the path;
When on the lowest step my feet did stay,

I felt as though my face were fanned beneath 67
A wing, and heard a voice say, "Blessed are
"The peacemakers, who know not evil wrath."

Already over us had risen so far 70
The last sun's rays, where close the night doth tread,
That all around appearèd many a star.

"O virtue mine, why dost thou fly?" I said 73
Within myself, feeling my limbs fast bound
By such a truce that all their power was sped.

No higher reached the stair than where we found 76
Ourselves, and fixed thereby we surely were
E'en as a vessel that doth take the ground.

And I gave heed awhile if I might hear 79
Aught in the circle new, then turning thence
Unto my master, prayed him to give ear.

"Dear Father mine, tell me of what offence 82
"Mankind is purged within this circle; though
"Our feet are stayed, stay not thy eloquence."

And he, "Love of the good that falls below 85
"Its duty, here restores itself; the oar
"Once slackly plied, here 'gins again to row.

CANTO XVII

123

“ But that thou understand me clearly more, 88
 “ Turn all thy mind to me, so shall be won
 “ Good fruit of our delay in plenteous store.

“ Creator, nor created thing, my son,” 91
 So he began, “ was ever without love
 “ Through nature or through reason; that thou’st
 known.

“ Nature’s will ever void of error prove, 94
 “ Reason’s may err, and aiming false be wrecked,
 “ Or may too feebly, or too strongly move.

“ Whilst at the primal worths, it aims direct, 97
 “ And at the second with a temperate stress
 “ The joys of sin it never can effect.

“ But when to evil twists it, or doth press 100
 “ After the good with more or less intent,
 “ The creature works against creativeness.

“ Hence canst thou understand how love is meant 103
 “ To be the seed of every worth, the real
 “ Source of each deed meriting punishment.

“ Now inasmuch as never, from the weal 106
 “ Of its own object, turn the eyes of love,
 “ Hatred of self will nothing e’er reveal.

“ And since we can conceive no life enough, 109
 “ If far from Primal Life alone it stand,
 “ From hate of Him is every love cut off.

- " Therefore if my division well is planned, 112
" Our evil love is of our neighbour, so
" Comes in your clay in manners three to hand.
- " For one will hope his excellence will grow 115
" Out of his neighbour's loss, so will be glad,
" That from his greatness he should be brought low.
- " And one will fear to lose the pow'r he had, 118
" Favour and fame and honour, if excelled,
" So loves the contrary, and groweth sad.
- " And one will have his shame by wrong so swelled
" His greed is all for vengeance, and behold 122
" He must to harm of others be impelled.
- " Below us there is mourned this love threefold; 124
" Now be thy knowledge of the next amended,
" Which hastes to good in measure ill-controlled.
- " Dimly by all a good is apprehended, 127
" Wherein the mind may rest, and 'tis desired;
" And for that prize by all men 'tis contended.
- " If love that draws you there, be slow and tired 130
" Either to see or gain it, this ledge then
" Torments, if just repentance be acquired.
- " And there's a good which brings not any gain, 133
" Happiness 'tis not, nor the essence good,
" The fruit and root of all good worth to men.

CANTO XVII

125

“ Love that too eagerly hath e’er pursued 136

“ This end, is mourned above in circles three;

“ But of their thrice divided multitude,

“ I speak not, that they may be sought by thee.” 139

CANTO XVIII

VIRGIL's discourse has suggested to Dante's mind the question as to the nature of love which the group of poets to which he belonged were incessantly discussing. Would Virgil resent as irrelevant or flippant a question on this subject? Or might he (Dante) take this unique opportunity of learning the true answer? Virgil encourages his question, and then proceeds to answer it. Love implies a potential attraction to the loved subject. When first it is presented to the mind, the mind sways towards it, and then the experience of delight in communion with it confirms the original attraction; and the desire thus waked can only be stilled by fruition. Thus, while the capacity for love, that is to say, sensitiveness in general, is the sign of a higher organism, and therefore good, it is a profound misconception to regard every specific affection as itself good, since love of some sort is the root of all evil as of all good conduct. Dante follows keenly; but this universality of love as a motive power, this necessity of the presentation from without of its object, and this spontaneous response of the corresponding and pre-existing latent impulse within, seem to obliterate all merit or demerit. Virgil refers to Beatrice for the final answer, but declares meanwhile that every human soul has a certain intellectual and emotional constitution (for which it deserves neither praise nor blame) in virtue of which it cannot help believing the supreme truths (the axioms) and loving the supreme good (God). Intellectual merit begins when we refuse to believe things that present themselves to us with a specious appearance of truth but cannot really be affiliated to the axioms. And so moral merit begins when we refuse to love and follow things that are speciously attractive but cannot be affiliated

- “ Therefore, sweet Father dear, I pray to thee, 13
“ Define this love which is the minister
“ Of every good deed and its contrary.”
- “ If toward me,” he said, “ directed were 16
“ The keen eyes of thy intellect, ’twere plain
“ How much the blind, who make them guides, do err.
- “ The mind, which is for love created fain, 19
“ Responds to all that pleaseth it the best,
“ When pleasure wakes it into life again.
- “ Your power of comprehending being impressed 22
“ By a real object, mirrors it in you,
“ And makes the mind turn there at its behest.
- “ And if, on being turned, it bends thereto, 25
“ Love is that bending; that is nature, bound
“ By pleasure thus within your lives anew.
- “ Then, e’en as fire streams upward from the ground,
“ Because its form compels it rise to where 29
“ Longest in its material ’tis found,
- “ So to desire (a spirit quickening) there 31
“ Moves the enamoured mind, and till the thing
“ It loves hath made it glad, it resteth ne’er.
- “ Now see how far from truth they’re wandering, 34
“ Who claim that every act by love inspired,
“ Praise, in and for itself, is meriting,

“ Because, forsooth, worthy to be admired 37
“ Its substance seems, but though the wax be fine
“ Not every imprint is a thing desired.”

“ My wit attentive and these words of thine,” 40
I answered, “ show love to me, clear and whole,
“ But thus more teeming grow these doubts of mine;

“ If from without comes love, and if the soul 43
“ Moves with that foot alone, no merit 'tis
“ If straight or crookedly she seek her goal.”

And he to me: “ So far as reason sees 46
“ Here can I tell thee; but for all beyond,
“ (The acts of faith,) wait still for Beatrice.

“ In each substantial form, which both is bound 49
“ To matter and distinct therefrom, I ween
“ Is a specific virtue to be found,

“ Which, save in action, never can be seen, 52
“ Nor, save in its effects, is visible,
“ As a plant showeth life in leafage green.

“ Whence prime impressions reach his mind, man still
“ Is ignorant therefore, nor knoweth he 56
“ How to the prime desires inclines his will,

“ Which are in you, as instinct in the bee 58
“ To make its honey; and from every hint
“ Of praise or blame this prime will resteth free.

- "Now, that all other wills with this be blent, 61
"Virtue, which counsels, is innate in you,
"And ought to guard the threshold of assent.
- "This is the principle from whence a due 64
"Deserving is derived, as it is found
"Gathering and winnowing false loves and true.
- "Those who in reasoning touched deepest ground, 67
"Perceived this inborn freedom, therefore they
"Held 'twas the world's task to make conduct sound.
- "Granted that every love which in you may 70
"Be kindled, from necessity ariseth,
"Yet power to bridle it in you doth stay.
- "By the name noble virtue, Beatrice prizeth 73
"Free will, let this within thy mind be clear,
"If she to speak thereof with thee desireth."
- The moon, retarded unto midnight near, 76
Fashioned like to a burning bucket showed,
Making the stars more scant to us appear,
- And coursed against the heavens on that road 79
Which, when Rome sees the setting sun between
The western islands, 'neath his rays hath glowed.
- That gentle shade, through whom more famed is seen
Pietola than any Mantuan town, 83
Had put the load off which my doubt had been.

CANTO XVIII

131

So I, who from the questions I had sown, 85
Had harvest made of reasons clear and plain,
Like one who wanders drowsily was grown.

But all this drowsiness from me was ta'en 88
Quite suddenly by folk, who in full flight
Came from behind, and on our course did gain.

And as a fury and a rout by night 91
Ismenus and Asopus saw of old,
If they of Thebes had need of Bacchus' might,

So came there then, from what I could behold, 94
Quickening their pace around that circle, those
Who by good will and just love are controlled.

Soon were they on us, since for ever goes 97
Running that mighty throng, and as they passed
From two who wept in front the cry uprose:

"Unto the mountains Mary ran with haste," 100
"Caesar, in need Ilerda to subdue,
"Piercèd Marseilles and then on Spain he raced."

"Speed! Speed!" then cried the others all, "lest
through 103

"Our little love should time be lost, for now
"This striving to do well may grace renew."

"O ye who such keen eagerness do show 106
"The sloth and negligence to mend, whereby
"Lukewarm ye were in well-doing below,

“ This man who lives (surely I do not lie), 109
“ Desires to mount, if once again the sun
“ May shine, so say whether the pass is nigh.”

These were my leader's words and thereupon 112
One of the spirits answered: “ Follow us,
“ Soon will the journey to the cleft be done.

“ Our wish for speed is so imperious, 115
“ We may not stay, therefore do thou forgive
“ If here our penance seem discourteous.

“ San Zeno's abbot I, and once did live 118
“ 'Neath Barbarossa, in Verona fair,
“ For whose good rule Milan hath still to grieve.

“ And one, with one foot in the grave, is there, 121
“ Who for that monastery shall lament,
“ And for his power therein soon come to care.

“ Because in its true shepherd's place he sent 124
“ His bastard son, whose mind was turned to ill,
“ E'en more than was his body foul and bent.”

I know not if he ceased or if he still 127
Said more, so far already had he sped,
But this I heard and kept with right good will.

And by my succour in all need, 'twas said:— 130
“ Turn hither, that thou mayst behold two more
“ Who come, and bite at sloth as swift they tread.”

CANTO XVIII

133

These, last of all that band, cried out: " Before 133

" The Jordan saw its heirs, that people all

" Was dead, for whom the sea set wide its door."

" They who endured not till the coronal 136

" Upon Anchises' son was set at last,

" Unto a life inglorious chose to fall."

Then when those shades so far from us had passed 139

That they were seen no more, a fancy new

Into the river of my mind was cast,

And thoughts, diverse and many joined thereto, 142

And so I rambled vaguely on and on,

Till eyes for very wandering heavy grew,

And into dream my thoughts were changed anon. 145

CANTO XIX

As morning approaches Dante has a vision of the Siren, whose filthiness Virgil, at the exhortation of a lady from heaven, exposes. Dante is roused by Virgil's repeated summons. The sun is fully up, and the pilgrim, deep in thought, advances to the next stair, where once again he feels the breath of the angel's wing, and hears the blessing of them that mourn. Dante is still plunged in his reverie, from which Virgil rouses him by question, explanation, and admonition. They who have yielded to the Siren,—foul but seeming fair,—must expiate their offences in the three remaining circles. Let Dante tread the earth like a man and raise his eyes to the heaven above. And so they reach the fifth circle. There the souls of the avaricious and prodigal cleave to the pavement, no longer in sordid love, but in the anguished sense that they are unworthy to look upon aught more fair; and the limbs which had bound themselves on earth are now held in helpless captivity. Virgil inquires the way, and from the form in which the answer is given Dante gathers the law of Purgatory, hereafter to be more fully confirmed, which permits souls to pass without delay or scathe through any circles of the mount wherein sins are purged by which they themselves are unstained. He silently asks Virgil's leave to stay and question the soul that has spoken. It is Pope Adrian V. who for little over a month bore the weight of the papal mantle, scarce tolerable to him who would keep it from defilement; and in answer to Dante's tender entreaty he expounds the nature of the penalties of this circle. He himself had been given over to avarice till he reached the summit of human greatness, saw its emptiness and turned in penitence to God. When Dante speaks again, Adrian perceives that he has knelt down, in reverence to Peter's successor;

whereon he bluntly bids him straighten his legs, and explains that no formal or official position or relation, however close or however august, has place in the spirit world, where personality is stripped of office. Then he urges Dante to pass on and leave his penitence undisturbed, making a reference to his niece who had married one of Dante's future friends the Malaspini; which reference the pilgrim may, if he so choose, interpret as a request for prayers for the departed soul.

E'en in the hour when faileth heat of day
To warm the cold o' the moon, since utterly
'Tis vanquished by the earth or Saturn's ray:

When, ere the dawn, the geomancers see 4
Their greater fortune in the East arise,
Where soon its way no longer dark will be,

A woman stuttering, with squinting eyes, 7
And crooked in her gait, maimed in the hand,
And fallow hued as one whom sickness tries,

Came in my dream. I gazed upon her, and 10
As sunshine warms cold limbs by night down-weighed,
So then my gaze, I seemed to understand,

Set free her tongue, her form straight upright made
In little time, her pale face colouring, 14
Till in the hue of love she was arrayed.

When thus her tongue was loosed, she 'gan to sing, 16
So that 'twas difficult for me I fear,
To turn from her and cease from hearkening.

" I am," she sang, " that Siren sweet to hear, 19
" Who in mid sea leads mariners astray,
" So pleasant am I to the listening ear.

" I turned Ulysses from his wandering way, 22
" With song of mine; and whoso bides with me
" Is made so glad he ever longs to stay."

Her mouth was not yet closed, when suddenly 25
A lady, swift and holy, by her stood,
So that confusion should her portion be.

" O Virgil, Virgil," in her angered mood 28
She said, " who then is this? Is this thy care? "
He came, fast gazing on the lady good,

The other seized and laid her belly bare, 31
Tearing her clothes in front; my slumber fled
At the foul stench that issued from it there.

I moved my eyes, and the good Virgil said: 34
" Thrice at the least I've called thee; rise therefore
" To find the entrance where thy feet may tread."

I rose; the high day's glory gilded o'er 37
The holy mountain's circles; with the sun
New shining on our backs, we sped once more.

Following him, I bore my brow as one 40
Who burdened with his thought doth so appear,
He makes himself like an arch half begun,

When I heard spoken: "Come, the pass is here," 43
In tones more gently gracious than we men
In these our mortal confines ever hear.

With outspread pinions, like a swan's wing, then 46
He, speaking, showed us where the opened way
Betwixt two walls of stubborn rock lay plain.

Then his wings fanned us, while: "Blessèd are they,"
He said, "who mourn, for comfort sure shall bring
"Gifts to the souls where sorrow holdeth sway."

"What ails thee," said my leader questioning 52
As upward past the angel we did wend,
"That gazing still on earth thou'rt wandering?"

And I: "A vision strange which still doth bend 55
"My will, so that I needs must think thereon,
"Makes me to go in fear that knows no end."

"Saw'st thou that ancient witch, for whom alone 58
"Above us now they weep?" he said, "hast found
"How man breaks free from her dominion?"

"Let that suffice, let thy heels spurn the ground, 61
"Look on that lure, which the eternal King
"With the great spheres for ever spins around."

As first the falcon where his talons cling 64
Looketh, then at the call will turn, and where
Desire of food doth draw him, spreads his wing,

- So then was I and upward so did fare, 67
Until the circling is begun, and passed
Through the cleft rock that made the mounting stair.
- When the fifth circle's open ground at last 70
I reached, I found there folk who sore did weep,
Face downward on the earth, an army vast.
- " My soul unto the dust doth cleave," and deep 73
They sighed as this they said, till to my mind
The meaning of the words could hardly creep.
- " O ye, God's chosen ones, whose lot more kind 76
" Is made by justice and by hope, we pray
" Direct us that the upward road we find."
- " If ye desire most swift to reach the way, 79
" And come not needing prostrate here to lie,
" Let your right hands the outward ever stay."
- Thus asked the poet and this fair reply 82
Was spoken from before us; 'neath the word
I saw what was concealed, and presently,
- I turned mine eyes upon my gracious lord, 85
And knowing by my look my deep desire,
He, with glad gesture, made thereto accord.
- When I might act whereto I did aspire, 88
Forward I went, above that shade to bow,
Whose speech had lit in me an eager fire,

" Spirit, who by thy tears dost ripen now 91
" That which to God can turn mankind alone,
" A moment from thy greater care allow,

" And say, who wast thou, why must ye lie prone, 94
" And if for aught down yonder thou dost yearn,
" Whence living I set forth, O make it known."

And he: " Why heaven thus our backs doth turn 97
" Unto itself, I'll tell, but first in me,
" A follower of Peter must thou learn.

" 'Twixt Sestri and Chiaveri fair to see 100
" A river flows, and from its name was brought
" A title to my race. How heavily

" Weighs the great mantle, so that feather wrought 103
" Seem other burdens unto him who'd fain
" Keep it from mire, for scarce a month was taught.

" Late my conversion was, ah me! but when 106
" Pastor of Rome I was elected, so
" I found the life which lying is and vain.

" No peace therein I found the heart could know, 109
" Nor in that life could one ascend more high,
" Whence love of this began in me to glow.

" Unto that hour a wretched soul was I, 112
" Parted from God and lost in avarice,
" Now punished therefore must thou see me lie.

" The souls downbeaten to be cleansed, suffice 115
" To show what greed of gold to mortals brings,
" Nor hath the mount a bitterer pain than this.

" E'en as our eye, fixed fast on earthly things, 118
" Was not uplifted to the summit clear,
" Justice hath plunged it where to earth it clings.

" As avarice quenched love for all things dear 121
" And good, whereby our works were lost for aye,
" So justice holds us fast in penance here;

" Bound by the hands and feet and snared we stay,
" And while it please the Lord of Justice, still 125
" And outstretched shall we lie in this same way."

I had kneeled down, full of an eager will 127
To speak, but when by listening he knew
What reverence for him my thoughts did fill,

" To what cause," said he, " is thy stooping due? "
" Learning your dignity," I answerèd, 131
" My conscience, for thus standing, pierced me
through."

" Straighten thy limbs, my brother, rise! " he said, 133
" Err not, a fellow-servant know in me,
" With thee and with the others to one Head.

" If e'er the hallowed sound were grasped by thee, 136
" Where ' Neque nubent ' saith the gospel, well
" Why thus I speak, thou'ldst understand and see.

CANTO XIX

141

“ Now get thee hence ; I would not have thee dwell 139

“ Here longer, hindering my tears, whereby

“ I ripen that which late thy lips did tell.

“ Yonder a niece, good in herself, have I 142

“ Named Alagia, if the evil worth

“ Of our house turn her not to vanity,

“ And she alone is left to me on earth.” 145

CANTO XX

UNWILLING to break short his conference, but more unwilling yet further to trespass on the courteous forbearance of his interlocutor, Dante passes among the weeping souls, through whose eyes that curse of all the world is distilling itself away! When will He come who shall chase the wolf of avarice from earth? Dante hears one of the prostrate souls rehearse examples of generous poverty, and learns that he is the ancestor of the royal line of France, the root of that evil tree that darkens all the Christian lands with its shadow. Comparatively harmless in its earlier generations, this house had gathered evil as it gathered strength; hero and saint alike have been its victims; it couched the lance of Judas against Florence; its own flesh and blood and the sacred orders of chivalry are alike regarded by it as things to coin; and the very person of the Vicar of Christ has been crucified by it while thieves were left alive. At such deeds wrath would torture the divine peace itself were it not soothed by the prospect of vengeance. Warning examples of avarice uttered at night balance the daily recitation of the virtuous counterparts. The mountain now shakes as with an earthquake, and a mighty cry of "Glory to God in the highest" rises from all its terraces; startled and perplexed by which, though bidden by Virgil not to fear, Dante swiftly pursues his path.

'Gainst better will the will doth feebly fight,
Wherefore to please him, 'gainst my pleasure's bent,
I drew from the stream my sponge unfilled and light.

On moved I; and my leader ever went 4
Close to the rock, where lay the spaces clear
As on a wall near to the battlement,

Since they, who drop by drop distil it here, 7
The sin that fills the world, their eyelids through,
The other side approach the edge too near.

Cursèd be thou, thou ancient she-wolf, who 10
More than all other beasts hast snatched thy prey,
Since thy vast hunger is for ever new!

O heaven, in thy circling if we may 13
Believe that change is wrought for us below,
When comes he, who shall chase this beast away?

On went we, and our steps were few and slow, 16
And I intent upon the shades, whose cry
And piteous lament mine ears did know.

By chance I heard, "Sweet Mary," presently 19
Called out before us, with deep groaning, more
Than women make when they in travail lie;

And then continuing: "Thou wert so poor, 22
"As may be known e'en by that hostelry,
"Where thou laidst down thy burden we adore."

"O good Fabricius," came next to me, 25
"Who poverty with virtue didst desire,
"Rather than riches with iniquity."

Such pleasure in me might these words inspire, 28
That willing to know more, toward the shade,
From whom they seemed to come, I drew yet nigher,

It further told of the great bounty made 31
By Nicholas to budding maidenhood,
That unto honour might their youth be led.

Then said I; "Soul, who thus proclaimest good, 34
"Tell me who wert thou, why alone from thee,
"Are worthy praises in this place renewed?

"Not without wages shall thy speaking be, 37
"If I return the pathway brief to tread,
"My life, that tow'rd its goal flies speedily."

And he: "I'll tell thee, not for solace shed 40
"From yonder on me, but to grant the suit
"Of grace that shines in thee, ere thou art dead.

"I of that evil tree was once the root, 43
"That throws its shade o'er Christian lands to-day,
"So rarely from it can be plucked good fruit.

"But sure if Ghent and Bruges, Lille and Douai 46
"Had power, their vengeance would not tarry, and
"For this, from Him who judgeth all, I pray.

"Hugh Capet was I called in yonder land; 49
"Louis and Philip spring of me, the men
"Who over France of late as rulers stand.

"Son was I of a Paris butcher. When 52
"The ancient race of kings grew weak, when all,
"Save one, grey garments to themselves had ta'en,

- " Into my eager hands I found did fall 55
" The reins of government; such power grew round
" My new won riches, and such friends withal,
" That with the widowed diadem was crowned 58
" The head of my son; he it is from whence
" Those royal bones their origin have found.
" So long as the great dowry of Provence 61
" Had ta'en no shame from my posterity,
" 'Twas little worth yet free from sin's offence.
" Then using force and fraud in like degree 64
" Began its rapine; seizing for amends
" Ponthieu and Normandy and Gascony.
" Charles came to Italy and to make amends, 67
" When Conradin his victim was o'erthrown,
" Thrust Thomas back to heaven to make amends.
" A time I see, ere many days have flown, 70
" Shall draw another Charles from out of France,
" That he and his the better may be known.
" Alone and weaponless, save for the lance 73
" That Judas jousted with, he comes; and the frame
" Of Florence breaks apart, by his advance.
" Thence shall he win, not land, but sin and shame, 76
" The might of both upon him being more grave,
" Since of them both he lightly counts the blame.

- " I see the other whom his ship once gave 79
" To prison, sell his daughter, chaffering
" O'er her as pirates do over a slave.
- " O avarice, on us what canst thou bring 82
" More, since thou'st drawn my race to thee so far,
" For their own flesh they care not anything?
- " That past and future ill seem less to bear, 85
" I see by the fleur-de-lys Alagna ta'en,
" Christ in His vicar made a prisoner;
- " A second time I see Him mocked; again 88
" Renewed the gall and vinegar I see,
" Again 'mid living thieves I see Him slain.
- " The later Pilate in such cruelty 91
" I see; this sates him not, his greedy sail
" Into the temple bears he lawlessly.
- " O Lord, when shall Thy vengeance clear avail 94
" To make me glad, which hidden doth abide,
" Making thine anger sweet, behind the veil?
- " The words I uttered of the only Bride 97
" Of the Holy Ghost, which made thee tow'rd me turn,
" That I thereon sure comment should provide,
- " Make up the answer that our prayers earn 100
" While the day lasteth, but when night is here
" Instead, to use a contrary sound we learn,

CANTO XX

147

"Pygmalion we repeat, whom greed so sheer 103
"Of gold, made thief and traitor by its stress,
"And e'en of parricide removed the fear.

"And avaricious Midas' wretchedness, 106
"Which on his greedy prayer was seen to fall,
"Whereby 'tis right we're moved to mirthfulness.

"Then the mad Achan will each one recall, 109
"How from the spoils he stole, till Joshua's ire
"Seems yet to bite him here implacable.

"Then with her husband we accuse Sapphire; 112
"We praise the hoofs that Heliodorus stilled;
"The infamy circles the mount like fire

"Of Polymnestor who Polydorus killed. 115
"And last we cry: 'O Crassus, tell us now,
" 'Thou knowest; how tastes the gold wherewith
thou'rt filled?'

"Whiles we discourse, one loud, the other low, 118
"As doth the impulse that incites to speech
"A greater or a lesser force allow;

"Whence erstwhile at the good which daily each 121
"Doth tell, alone I was not, but near by
"No other voice had power thine ears to reach."

Now were we parted from him presently, 124
And striving to surmount the way, as 'twas
So far permitted to our strength to try,

- When lo! I felt the mountain tremble, as 127
A thing that falleth, and a chill thereon
Gripped me, as one who unto death must pass.
- Sure ne'er by Delos was such quaking known, 130
Before Latona made therein her nest,
To bear the eyes that since in heaven have shone.
- Then all about was such shouting raised, 133
That tow'rd me drew my master: "Let not fear"
He said, "whilst I am guide, assail thy breast."
- "Gloria in excelsis Deo," clear 136
Cried all, as far as could my hearing tell
From those whose cry came to me, being near.
- We stood while deep suspense upon us fell, 139
As on the shepherds who first heard that song,
Till with the trembling ceased the hymn as well.
- Then once again we went our road along, 142
Glancing at shades who lay upon the ground
While to their wonted plaints returned the throng.
- If memory is not in error found, 145
No such desire for knowledge ever wrought
On me, in chains of ignorance fast bound,
- As there I seemed to feel rapt in my thought; 148
For haste I dared not any questioning,
Nor of myself could I behold there aught;
- Wherefore I timid went and wondering. 151

CANTO XXI

WITH the thirst for knowledge, which God only can slake, keen within him, hastening along the impeded path to keep pace with his leader, and pierced with sympathetic grief for the souls at his feet, Dante pursues his way, till a shade coming behind them gives them the salutation of peace, to which Virgil answers. They are on the western side of the mountain, and the sun still neighbours the east, so that Dante casts no shadow, and the new-come soul does not recognise him as one still living in the first life; and so he gathers from the words of Virgil's benediction that he and his companion alike are souls excluded from bliss. In answer to the question that hereon arises, Virgil explains his own state and Dante's; and to the keen satisfaction of the latter, asks in his turn for an explanation of the earthquake and the shout. The shade answers that no material or casual thing can affect the sacred ways of the mount. It trembles only when some soul rises from lying prone with the avaricious, or starts from any other point of the mount to ascend to the earthly Paradise. The repentant souls, though they wish to gain the term and gather the fruit of their penance, are meanwhile as keen to suffer as once they were to sin; and when their present impulse unites with their ultimate desire and creates the instant will to rise, this in itself is a token and assurance that their purgation is complete, and the whole mountain rings with the praises of the spirits. May they, too, soon be sped upon their way! Virgil now asks the shade to reveal himself, and learns that he is the poet Statius. He combines with an enumeration of his own works a glowing tribute to the *Aeneid* and its author; to have lived on earth with whom he would accept another year of exile. Virgil's glance checks the smile

that rises on Dante's face at these words, but not till Statius has caught its flash upon his features. Pressed on either side, the poet is finally released from Virgil's prohibition, and informs Statius that he is indeed in the presence of that very one who strengthened him to sing of men and gods; whereon Statius, forgetting that he and Virgil are empty shades, drops at his dear master's feet to kiss them.

The natural thirst which nought can satisfy
Except that water, the Samaritan
Woman entreated, wrought increasingly

Within me, and in haste I almost ran 4
Behind my guide, on the encumbered way,
And grieved just vengeance on each side to scan;

And lo! e'en as we know that Luke doth say, 7
Christ, risen from the grave victorious,
Appeared to two at setting of the day,

A shade appeared and came behind us thus, 10
Viewing the crowd that lay about his feet,
Nor did we see him ere he spake to us:

" Brothers, God's peace be with you," this to greet 13
Quickly we turned, and Virgil instantly
The answer made which to this speech is meet.

And then: " May that true court, by whose decree 16
" Eternal exile binds me, bring thee fair
" In peace, unto the blest consistory."

"How," said he, as we made good speeding there, 19
"If ye are shades whom God holds in disdain,
"What guide hath led you thus far by His stair?"

"If thou regard'st the signs," my teacher then, 22
"Which this man bears, marked by the angel's might,
"Thou'lt see him fitted with the good to reign.

"But because she, who spinneth day and night, 25
"Had not yet drawn for him the flax, whereby
"By Clotho is each mortal's distaff dight,

"His soul, sister to thee and me, thus high 28
"To rise, could come not all alone, because
"It sees not in our fashion verily;

"Wherefore was I drawn forth from hell's wide jaws 31
"To guide him, and with him as guide shall go
"Far as my school may lead him by God's laws.

"But knowst thou why the mountain trembled so 34
"A moment since, and why one shout was raised
"From all its slopes to the soft base below?"

The needle's eye of longing his request 37
Threaded, and, just with hope, my thirst was brought
To less intensity than erst distressed.

"The mountain's sacred law endureth nought," 40
The other said, "which is disorderly,
"Or by a force unnatural is wrought.

- " From every earthly change it here is free; 43
" What heaven from itself receives can so
" Become a cause, but nothing else can be;
- " For never rain, nor hail, nor any snow, 46
" Nor dew, nor frosty rime falls here, above
" The little stair of those three steps below.
- " No clouds, or dense or thin, may hither move, 49
" Nor lightning flash, nor Thaumas' child appear,
" Who yonder oft o'er many lands doth rove;
- " Dry vapour never higher rises here 52
" Than to the stairway's top, whereof I spake,
" Where rest the feet of Peter's minister.
- " Below perchance it more or less may quake, 55
" But here, through wind-storms which the earth con-
ceals,
" I know not how, it never hath to shake.
- " But when some soul knows herself cleansed, and feels
" That she may rise and move to mount above, 59
" Then quakes it, then the shout behind her peals.
- " The cleansing pure, the will alone can prove, 61
" Filling the soul, making her will avail,
" When from her cloister she is free to move.
- " She wills before, but yet her will must fail 64
" Since that God's justice makes her all as fain
" For torment now, as erst in sin to dwell.

" And I, who 'neath this suffering have lain 67
" Five hundred years and more, felt only now
" Freedom of will, a better place to gain.

" Therefore the earthquake came; thus knewest thou
" The pious spirits round the mount give praise 71
" To God; swift grace to them may He allow!"

So spake he; and because the draught allays 73
Thirst most where thirst is greatest, ne'er by me
Could the delight be told his words did raise.

And the wise leader: " Now the net I see, 76
" Which here doth catch you, how 'tis broken through,
" Why it quakes here, and makes such joy to be.

" Now may it please thee, give me knowledge who 79
" Thou wast; and why, here while the ages rolled
" Thou'st lain, glad were I if from thee I knew."

" What time the King of Kings made strong and bold
" Titus the good, to avenge the wounds from where
" Once flowed the sacred blood by Judas sold,"

Replied that spirit, " I was famous there, 85
" Though not as yet for faith, yet for that name
" Which most endureth, which men most revere;

" My muse in singing won so sweet a fame, 88
" That from Toulouse, Rome drew me to her will,
" And crowns of myrtle might my forehead claim.

" Statius the people yonder call me still; 91
" Of Thebes I sang, and great Achilles, though
" Under the second load I failed and fell.

" The seeds from whence my poet's fire did grow, 94
" Were sparks which warmed me from that flamedivine,
" Whence more than a thousand have been made to
glow,

" I mean the Aeneid, gentle mother mine, 97
" And nurse in poesy, by whom unfriended,
" Not to a drachm's weight would my scale incline.

" And yonder to have lived while Virgil wended 100
" Yet on the earth, another sun I'd stay
" More than I owed, ere this my exile ended."

Virgil turned to me at these words straightway; 103
" Keep silence," silently his glances bade;
But worth of will has no o'ermastering sway,

For tears and laughter follow so unstayed 106
And swift, the passion whence each springs, that will
In those who love truth most, is least obeyed.

Only, as one who makes a sign, I still 109
Smiled, then the shade said nought, but in my eyes
Looked, where the inner meaning most doth dwell,

Then said: " May such great toil achieve its prize, 112
" So say why even now across thy face,
" A flash of laughter flitted lightningwise."

CANTO XXI

155

Now either way am I in parlous case, 115
One bids to silence, one of speech is fain,
Wherefore I sigh, and by my master's grace

Am understood, and, "Have no fear," again, 118
He said "of speaking; speak and tell him all
"He asks, and longs so clearly to obtain."

Whereat I said: "Perchance it may befall, 121
"Thou wonderest, spirit of old, my smile to see,
"But now to greater wonder must I call.

"He who doth upward guide mine eyes, e'en he 124
"That Virgil is, from whom thy power was wrought
"To sing of men and gods; if now in me

"Some other cause for laughter thou hast sought 127
"Deem it untrue: believe it sprung to meet
"The words thou saidst of him, telling thy thought."

Already stooped he to my teacher's feet 130
To clasp them, but "Brother," he said, "not so.
"A shade thou art, seeking a shade to greet!"

He rose and spake: "Now canst thou surely know
"The measure of the love that warms me, when 134
"I thus forget our nothingness, as though

"I thought of shadows as of living men." 136

CANTO XXII

THE pilgrims have already begun to mount the stair that leads to the sixth circle. Another P has been struck by an angel-wing from Dante's brow, and the blessing pronounced on those that thirst after righteousness. Virgil, with friendly insistence, presses to know how so great a soul as that of Statius could have harboured so puny a vice as avarice; whereon the other acknowledges with a smile the tender friendliness which this very perplexity implies, but answers that the keen scent of friendship is this time following a false track, for it is prodigality, not avarice, that has kept him more than five hundred years a prisoner in the fifth circle, where the two opposing sins are punished together. Nor had he escaped the pains of Hell for his offence, though committed in ignorance, had he not read a hidden warning in lines of Virgil's own. Virgil goes on to ask how Statius became a Christian, for there is no indication in his poems of his conversion; and Statius answers that it was Virgil's self who, like one passing through the night, bearing a lantern behind him, had lightened the path for the feet of others, though not for his own. It was that prophetic Eclogue which had revealed the truth to him, and won his sympathy for the persecuted saints; but he concealed his faith, and had atoned for his laggard love in the circle of the slothful for over four hundred years. Statius in his turn now questions Virgil as to the fate of other Latin poets, and Virgil tells him of the sad and noble life in Limbo, of the Greek and Latin poets there, and of the heroic souls whose story Statius himself had told. It is past ten o'clock in the morning when the pilgrims issue upon the sixth terrace, and, with the tacit approval of Statius, follow their usual course with the sun counter-clockwise, Dante eagerly hearkening to the converse of the two Latin poets.

This is the circle of the gluttons; and the pilgrims encounter
a wondrous tree, fruit-laden, and bedewed with clear water
from a neighbouring fall, from the midst of the foliage of
which a voice recites examples of abstinence.

Now was the angel far behind us left,
Who to the sixth great circle turned our way,
Having my face of one more scar bereft,

And said how blessed evermore are they 4
Who long for righteousness, and this had done
Though "sitiunt" and nought else did he say.

I, by this stage more than by any one 7
Before, made light, went on so easily,
No labour 'twas with those fleet souls to run.

Then began Virgil: "Love eternally 10
"Hath kindled other love, when lit by worth,
"If but its flame shone outward visibly;

"Wherefore, since Juvenal came down from earth 13
"To us in limbo, and made me to know
"The love for me, which in thy verse found birth,

"My goodwill unto thee hath come to grow 16
"A bond to one unseen ne'er known of men,
"And short henceforth will seem these stairs, I trow.

"But tell me, and if slackened is my rein 19
"By too much confidence, then as a friend
"Forgive, and as a friend reply again;

"A place to avarice how couldst thou lend 22

“Within thy breast, where through thy diligence

“ Wisdom so great did on thy thoughts attend? ”

When first he heard these words, seemed Statius
thence 25

Moved to a little laughter, then he said:

“ Each word is of thy love dear evidence.

“Truly how many times is furnishèd 28

“False cause for doubt by evil seeming thing,

“When the true reason of it lieth hid.

"Clearly thou deemest, by thy questioning, 31

"That I was avaricious, it may be

"Because of the circle of my punishing."

“Now know that avarice too far from me 34

“Was parted, and for this ill-timed excess,

"Thousands of moons have wrought the penalty;

“And had I not controlled my passion’s stress 37

“ When I gave heed to thee, exclaiming there

“As wroth with human nature’s wilfulness,

“ ‘Hallowed desire for gold, why dost thou ne’er 40

“ ‘Rule mortal appetite?’ I should indeed

“Mid rolling stones the dolorous joustings share.

“Then I perceived our hands could well exceed 43

“In opening their wings to spend, and then

“Turned back from that and other sins with heed,

"How many with shorn locks will rise again 46
"Through ignorance, which, while they live and e'en
"At the last hour, maketh repentance vain!

"And know that guilt, repelling any sin 49
"By the exact reverse, doth in this place
"Therewith dry up its leaf's luxuriant green.

"Therefore if I have been among that race 52
"To purge me, which doth avarice lament,
"'Tis that I might its contrary efface."

"Now when thy voice in that fierce strife was spent
"Made by Jocasta's twofold sorrow," said 56
The singer of the country's sweet content,

"By that which Clio touches, may't be read 58
"That faith not yet had made thee faithful, though
"Good works that still lack faith are null and dead.

"What sun or candles then, if this be so, 61
"Lightened thy darkness, till thou settest sail,
"Eager behind the Fisherman to go?"

And he: "'Twas thou whose word did first prevail,
"Sending me thirsty to Parnassus' spring, 65
"And then to God didst light me without fail.

"Thou wast as one in darkness journeying, 67
"Who bears a light behind, which helps him nought
"But wisdom to his followers doth bring,

- “ When thou didst say: ‘ The world anew is wrought,
“ ‘ Justice returns and the first age of man, 71
“ ‘ And a new race down from high heaven is brought.’
- “ Poet through thee, through thee a Christian 73
“ I was, but that thou better see it, I
“ Will colour now all that my hand has drawn.
- “ Already the whole world was verily 76
“ Big with the true belief, by servants sowed,
“ Sent from th’ eternal kingdom of the sky;
- “ And thy words, late I quoted, so abode 79
“ In harmony with these new preachers’ word,
“ That unto them right well I learned the road.
- “ Such reverence in me anon they stirred, 82
“ That when Domitian persecuted them,
“ Not without my tears were their wailings heard.
- “ And while I lived, unto their aid I came, 85
“ And every other sect I counted nought,
“ Seeing them live so wholly free of blame.
- “ And ere my verse to Theban rivers brought 88
“ The Greeks, I was baptized, but through my fear
“ I was a secret Christian, and I sought
- “ Long time to pass as pagan worshipper; 91
“ And the fourth circle, through this lukewarmness,
“ Held me for longer than four hundred year.

"Thou, therefore, whose revealing I must bless 94
"Of that great good whereof I tell, while now
"Is granted time, as up the mount we press,

"Where is our ancient Terence, dost thou know, 97
"Where Plautus, Varro and Caecilius, tell
"If damned they are, and in what group below."

"They, Persius and I, and many dwell," 100
My leader answered, "with that Greek, whom, o'er
"All other poets, nursed the Muses well,

"On the dark prison's first great circling floor 103
"Often we praise that mountain, in whose air
"Our fostermothers dwell for evermore.

"Euripides and Antiphon are there, 106
"And with Simonides and Agathon,
"Many whose brows did once the laurel wear.

"There, of thy people is Argia one, 109
"With fair Antigone, Deiphyle,
"And Ismene, sad, as she e'er was known.

"Her, who Langia showed, there mightst thou see, 112
"Thetis, Tiresias' daughter, there are found,
"There Deidamia and her sisters be."

Now were both poets silent, gazing round 115
Anew, freed from the walls and from the hill,
Which now at last broke into level ground.

Four handmaids of the day were passed, but still 118
The fifth was at the chariot pole, and sent
Upward its blazing horn with eager will,

When said my leader: "Let our course be bent 121
"Around the mount, as 'tis our wont to tread
"With our right shoulders toward the steep descent."

Thus custom there became our guide and led, 124
And with less doubt we set upon our road,
Because that soul of worth no hindrance made.

They moved in front, and I alone abode 127
Behind; and to their discourse I attended,
Which mastership of poesy bestowed.

But the sweet converse all too soon was ended, 130
When in the path we found a tree, which bore
A fruit wherein sweet sight and smell were blended.

And as a pine stem upward tapers more 133
From bough to bough, so downwards grew this tree;
I think, that none should climb it. Falling o'er

Its leaves, and spreading 'mid them cool and free, 136
Came a clear gush of water, on that side
Whereon our pathway hinderèd must be.

Close to the tree the poets drew; then cried 139
A voice from midmost of its leaves and said:
"Of this food shall ye go unsatisfied.

- " Mary thought more to make, when she was wed, 142
" The feast complete and worthy, and far less
" Of her own mouth, now answering in your stead.
- " And Roman dames of old, for parching stress, 145
" With water were content, and Daniel erst
" Gained wisdom, scorning food's attractiveness.
- " The primal age was golden fair at first; 148
" Acorns with hunger savoury it made,
" And every stream grew nectarlike with thirst.
- " Honey and locusts were the meat that stayed 151
" The Baptist in the desert, therefore grew
" He glorious, and he came with power arrayed,
- " As in the Gospel is revealed to you." 154

CANTO XXIII

DANTE's eyes search the foliage of the tree till he is summoned to advance by Virgil. Then he hears the cry, at once grievous and soothing, of the souls who presently overtake the travellers and turn to look upon them as they pass, though without pausing. These are the once gluttonous souls, with faces now drawn by thirst and hunger, so emaciated that the extremest examples of famine in sacred or profane records rush to Dante's mind. Their eye-sockets are like rings that have lost their gems; and he who reads *omo* (*homo*) (♠) on the face of man would find the three strokes of the *m* writ plain enough in the gaunt bones of cheek and nose. How can the fruit and trickling water work in such fashion on the shadowy forms? One of them turns his eyes from deep down in the sockets upon Dante, who, when he speaks, recognises his old companion Forese; and each of the astonished friends demands priority of satisfaction for his own amazed curiosity. Forese explains that there are other trees like to this, and that each renews the pain of the purging souls; nay, rather their solace; for they exult in crucifying with Christ the old Adam in them. Forese further shows how he owes to his widowed Nella his speedy promotion to the sweet bitterness of torment. She is all the dearer to God in proportion to the loneliness of her virtue in the place of infamy in which she lives. Forese proceeds to denounce the dissolute fashions of the women of Florence. Dante must now in his turn unfold the story of how he had been rescued from the worldly life which he and Forese had once lived together, of the strange journey on which Virgil has conducted him, of the promise that he shall meet Beatrice, and of the manner in which they have encountered Statius.

Whilst then I fixed on the green leaves mine eyes,
As he who finds the chase of birds so sweet,
That for it he will give his life for prize,

My more than father said: " My son, 'tis meet 4
" That thou come onwards; time's allotted space
" More usefully than this thou mayst complete."

My step I turned as quickly as my face 7
Toward the sages, whose discourse so spurred
Me on, that all my toil became a grace.

And lo! in tears and song the hymn was heard, 10
" Labia mea Domine " so clear,
That joy and grief to life together stirred.

" O father sweet, what is it that I hear? " 13
So I began: and he, " Some shades perchance,
" That loose their knot of debt, are passing near."

And like to musing travellers who glance, 16
If on their pathway folk unknown they see,
And turn and look, yet stay not their advance,

So, from behind came with more speed than we, 19
And passed us by, all silent and devout,
A throng of spirits, gazing fixedly.

Dark were the eyes of each and hollowed out, 22
Pallid their faces, and so worn and thin,
Their bones had shaped the skin beyond a doubt.

I think not withered thus into the skin 25
Erysichthon was, by his hunger made,
Even when most did fears of it begin.

“ Lo,” in my mind unto myself I said; 28
“ The race of old that lost Jerusalem,
“ When Mary’s hunger on her child was stayed.”

Each orbit was a ring that lacked a gem, 31
He who can “ omo ” in man’s face perceive,
Here could not fail to recognise the M.

How without knowledge could a man believe, 34
The scent of fruit and water thus had wrought,
Desires begetting so to gnaw and grieve?

Source of their hunger still I wondering sought, 37
Since of their leanness and their scurfy plight
The cause not yet was to my knowledge brought;

When lo! a shade that turned on me its sight, 40
Gazed from the hollows of his head a space,
Then cried, “ What favour doth on me alight? ”

Never should I have recognised his face, 43
But all that from his countenance was ta’en,
Was clear to me who heard his voice’s grace.

That spark had kindled in a flash so plain 46
My knowledge of the features changed so sore,
And on Forese’s face I looked again.

“ Not on my skin,” he prayed, “ discoloured o’er 49
“ With scaly leprosy, thus earnest stare,
“ Nor on the lack of flesh that once I wore;

“ But tell me truth of thee, and who are there, 52
“ The two souls in whose escort thou art led,
“ Nor stay unless that thou wilt speak me fair.”

“ That face of thine, that once I wept o’er, dead, 55
“ Gives me for weeping now no lesser will,
“ Beholding it so marred,” to him I said.

“ Bid me not speak whiles that I marvel still, 58
“ But tell me, for God’s sake, what strips you so;
“ He badly speaks whom other longings fill.”

“ From plans eternal,” said he, “ here below, 61
“ A virtue falls on water and on tree,
“ That thou hast seen, whereby I wasting know.

“ This people all, who sing thus mournfully, 64
“ In hunger and in thirst grow sanctified,
“ Who followed appetite too greedily.

“ Scent of the apple and the spray cast wide 67
“ Over the leafy green, kindles a need
“ To eat and drink, in those that here abide.

“ Not once alone, as on this road we speed 70
“ Around, is this our pain renewed; our pain,
“ I say, but rather solace, ’tis indeed;

" For this desire guides to the tree again, 73
" Which led glad Christ, at last ' Eli ' to say,
" When that His blood our freedom did obtain."

And I to him, " Forese, from that day, 76
" Thou gav'st for better life our world for dower,
" Not full five years have wheeled and passed away.

" If that in thee ended thy mortal power 79
" To sin, before that time of holy grief
" That weds anew to God, fulfilled its hour,

" How hast thou mounted here? 'Twas my belief 82
" To find thee still a lingerer below,
" Where time must be repaid by each time's thief."

And he to me, " So swift my steps may go, 85
" To drink the wormwood of tormenting sweet,
" Through the quick tears that from my Nella flow;

" She with her sighs and prayers devout and meet, 88
" Hath drawn me from the region of delay,
" And from the other circles freed my feet.

" She is more dear and loved of God alway, 91
" My widowed darling, who my heart did claim,
" Since more she doth of good, more lone she'll stay.

" Sardinia's Barbagia hath more shame 94
" Amongst its women, than the place wherein
" I left her, Barbagia of evil fame.

“ O brother dear, what words from me wouldst win?
“ With times to come is now my sight oppressed, 98
“ Nor old will this hour be, ere they begin;

“ When from the pulpit shall go forth behest, 100
“ To make the shameless Florence women fare
“ No more abroad showing the naked breast.

“ What Saracen or Barbary women e'er 103
“ Needed from man or priest a discipline,
“ To make them decent seeming garments wear?

“ But if the barren creatures could divine 106
“ What the swift heaven holds for them concealed,
“ E'en now their mouths would ope to howl and
whine.

“ For if aright the vision is revealed, 109
“ Sad shall they be, ere down o'erspreads the cheek
“ Of him who now to lullabies doth yield.

“ Brother, no longer hide from us who seek 112
“ To know; not I alone, but these folk all,
“ Who gaze where thou the sunlight rays doth break.”

Wherefore I said; “ If that thy mind recall 115
“ All whereby thou and I so woven were,
“ The present memory will heavy fall.

“ From that life turned me, he who paces there 118
“ Before me, short while since, when full she showed ”
(I pointed at the sun) “ his sister fair.

- " He through the deeps of night has made my road;
" And I from out the veritable dead 122
" Have followed, carrying my body's load.
- " Thence have his consolations drawn and led, 124
" Climbing and circling all the mountain round,
" Where ye, the world hath warped, are straightenèd.
- " He saith, so long his comrade am I bound, 127
" Till I shall be where Beatrice will stand,
" There needs must I bereft of him be found.
- " Virgil it is, by whom these things are planned," 130
(I pointed to him) " and this other shade
" Is he for whom each terrace of your land
- " That gives him up, e'en now, a trembling made." 133

CANTO XXIV

THE souls gather in amazement round the living man; who utters a surmise to his friend that Statius is perchance lingering on his way for the sake of Virgil's companionship; and then questions him concerning his sister Piccarda, and learns that she is already in heaven. The souls are so emaciated as to be barely recognisable, and Forese names a number of them as he points them out to Dante; an office which they accept with complacency, for recognition can bring no added shame, but may bring sympathy or aid to souls in Purgatory. Amongst them is Buonagiunta da Lucca, a poet of the old school of Guittone of Arezzo, who mutters a prophecy concerning a child of the name of Gentucca, whose gracious offices to Dante when she comes to woman's estate, shall give him tender associations with that city of Lucca which he and others have so fiercely denounced. Then he questions Dante as to the secret of the new school of Tuscan poetry which has superseded the one to which he belonged, and learns that it lies in the principle of trying not to say things beautifully, but to say beautiful things truly; a criticism in which he acquiesces with full content and satisfaction. Then all the other souls sweep forward, while Forese, like a straggler from a caravan, remains behind to question Dante as to his expected term of life, to hear his lamentations over the state of Florence, to utter a prophecy of the death of his relative Corso Donati, and then to speed forward to rejoin his companions, leaving Dante to follow the two great poets. The pilgrims now pass another tree like the one already encountered. They hear that it is a shoot from the one whereof Eve tasted the fruit; and from amongst its foliage warning examples of gluttonous excess are rehearsed. After a lengthened march in silent thought, they are startled by the blinding glory of

the angel guardian, whose wing wafts a breath laden as with perfume of flowers on a May morning upon Dante's brow; and the pilgrims hear the blessing pronounced on those whose hunger is measured by righteousness.

Neither did speech the going slacken, nor
The going speech, but talking, on we went
Swift as a ship a favouring wind before.

The shades, upon my living state intent, 4
Seeming as things twice dead, all drew from me,
E'en through their hollowed eyepits, wonderment.

And I continuing said, "Perchance doth he 7
"Seek more than else he would to journey slow
"Upward, that near another he may be.

"But where abides Piccarda? Dost thou know? 10
"Tell me if any one of note is there
"Among this people who regard me so."

"I know not if my sister were more fair 13
"Or were more good, but now in triumph glad
"On high Olympus, she her crown doth wear."

So said he first and then—"none hath forbade 16
"Here to name any, for whom fasting's pain
"Hath drained away the semblance once he had.

"This Bonagiunta is," (he pointed then) 19
"Of Lucca, and beyond his face behold,
"Leaner than others, who, 'mid living men

“ Within his arms did Holy Church enfold; 22
“ From Tours he came and purges by this fast,
“ Bolsena’s eels and the sweet wine of old.”

From one to another, naming them he passed 25
O’er many, and right glad seemed every face,
So no black glances were upon me cast.

Ubaldin’ dalla Pila and Boniface, 28
Beneath whose rook once many peoples were,
I saw devour the air for hunger’s stress.

Messer Marchese too, who time could spare 31
At Forlì with less thirst to drink his fill,
Yet thirsted so that sated was he ne’er.

But as a man, who looks, will set his will 34
On one of many, the Lucchese I
Chose, since he seemed to know me better still.

“ Gentucca,” or like word all murmuringly, 37
I heard, there where he felt the wounding strain
Of justice, which consumes so terribly.

“ O Soul,” I said, “ who seemest to be fain 40
“ To speak with me, that thou and I may get
“ Contentment from thy speech, O! make it plain.”

“ A woman is born, who wears no wimple yet,” 43
He said—“ through whom my town shall please thy
heart,
“ Whatever blame thereon by men is set.

" Hence with this prophecy shalt thou depart; 46
" The facts themselves the truth to thee will prove,
" If through my murmuring thou in error art.

" But do I look upon the man who wove 49
" First, the new rhymes that say when they begin,
" ' Ladies who have intelligence in love.' "

And I to him—" Lo! I am one who when 52
" Love breathes in me, do note it, and so fare
" Shaping the measure he dictates within."

" Brother, I see the knot now," said he, " where 55
" It held the Notary back, Guittone and me,
" Short of the sweet new style that wins mine ear.

" How close your pens do follow, well I see, 58
" Behind him whose commands your course supplied,
" Which fell not out with ours most certainly.

" He who looks further hath no more espied 61
" How from the one differs the other style."
Then was he silent as if satisfied.

As birds that winter by the banks of Nile, 64
Do sometimes form a squadron in the air,
Then fly more hastily and move in file,

So then did all the people that were there, 67
Making more speed as round about they faced,
Fleet, through the leanness and desire they bear.

- And as a weary man who far hath raced, 70
Lest his companions go and walks till when
His breast is eased, that panted with his haste,
- So joining me behind, Farese then, 73
Allowed the holy troop in front to go,
And said; "When shall I see thy face again?"
- "How long my life shall last, I do not know," 76
I answered; "but though my return be swift,
"Desire to reach this shore, will swifter show;
- "Because the place where I to live am left 79
"Is daily more of goodness dispossessed,
"And seems to woeful ruin doomed to drift."
- "Now go," he said, "for him, the guiltiest 82
"Herein, dragged at a horse's tail, I see,
"Towards the vale, ne'er by forgiveness blest.
- "At every stride the beast more speedily 85
"Rushes, and ever swifter, till to the ground
"It dashes him, disfigured horribly.
- "Not far those wheels have yet to journey round," 88
(He raised his eyes to heaven,) "ere clear thou'lt trace,
"The things no speech of mine may yet propound.
- "Now do thou stay behind, for in this place 91
"Time is full precious, hence too much I lose
"Thus journeying with thee and at thy pace."

- And as a horseman galloping will use 94
To come from out a troop that closely ride,
The honour of the first assault to choose;
- So parted he from us, with longer stride, 97
And with the two I held my way anon,
Great marshals whom the earth once glorified.
- And when before us he so far was gone, 100
That still my sight pursued him eagerly,
E'en as my mind behind his words had done,
- The laden branches of another tree 103
I saw all green where close at hand they grew,
For I but then had come where I could see.
- And folk beneath with upraised hands I knew, 106
Who cried beneath the leaves, I know not what,
Even as spoiled and greedy children do,
- Who beg, and he they beg of answers not, 109
But that their longing yet more keen may stay,
Holds their desire on high, nor hides a jot.
- Then as though undeceived they went their way; 112
And to the mighty tree we came more near,
That still denies, howe'er they weep and pray.
- " Pass onward ye, and come not nigher here; 115
" This plant from one above was truly grown,
" To eat whereof Eve paid a price so dear."

So 'mid the branches spake a voice unknown; 118
So Virgil, Statius, and I, drawn close
Went forward where the upward path was shown.

"Remember," said it, "how accursed were those 121
"Born of the clouds, who having gorged their fill,
"With double breasts 'gainst Theseus came as foes.

"Also the Hebrews, who in drinking still 124
"Showed themselves soft, so Gideon denied
"Their aid 'gainst Midian, when he left the hill."

So we, by one of the two margins' side 127
Passed on, and heard the sins of gluttony,
Which once such miserable gains supplied.

Then on the lonely road all separately, 130
A thousand steps and more beyond we made,
Each without speaking, very thoughtfully.

"Ye lonely three," a voice o' the sudden said, 133
"What go ye pondering?" I started so
As beasts will do when timid and afraid.

I raised my head, that seeing I might know, 136
And ne'er were seen in any furnaces,
Metals or glasses, red with such a glow,

As I saw one who said, "If it do please 139
"You mount on high, here must the turn be given,
"Here goeth he, who longs to go for peace."

His countenance all sight from me had riven; 142
I turned me to my Teachers, as one may
Who goes according as by sound he's driven.

Then as the herald of the dawning day, 145
The May breeze, stirs and wafts the scent of grass
And flowers, wherewith 'tis laden, o'er the way;

E'en such an air I felt that moment pass 148
Across my brow, and felt the pinions move,
Whereby ambrosial fragrance wafted was.

And then I heard, "Blest are they all, whose love 151
"Of taste, by grace illumined, kindles ne'er
"Within their breast too much desire, who prove

"That only when 'tis just, is hunger fair." 154

CANTO XXV

THE pilgrims pursue their way up the stair in single file. As the little stork longs but ventures not to try its wings, so Dante feels the question as to the meaning of what he has seen ever kindled by longing and quenched by diffidence on his lips; till, encouraged by Virgil, he seeks for instruction as to how the shadowy forms which need no sustenance can present the appearance and experience the sensations of gnawing hunger. Virgil hints by analogies from pagan story and from natural philosophy that our own experiences and sensations may well reflect themselves in unsubstantial appearances; or may be connected with physical changes in matter other than that of our bodies of flesh and blood; but refers to Statius, his Christian counterpart, for fuller exposition; for in truth this matter, though no part of Christian revelation, yet verges on those mysterious and intricate portions of Aristotle's doctrine which none save Christian philosophers have had vision clear enough truly to expound. Statius, after a polite disclaimer, proceeds to expound the Aristotelian doctrines of generation and embryology, showing how the human foetus passes through every stage, differing only from the lower forms of plant, polype, or animal, in that it possesses the potentiality of further development; whereas they have reached their goal. At the critical point now reached, Averroës himself went wrong, for finding no organ in the human body appropriated to the immaterial principle of intelligence, he conceived it to be no part of the individual life of man, but a universal all-pervading principle; whereas in truth the human soul or life is inbreathed direct by God into the perfect animal form of the man that is to be; and thereon it draws into itself all the lower vital functions already active there. Therefore when the body

dies, the gates of sense are indeed closed; but the soul itself which came from without remains with the purely immaterial powers of memory, intelligence, and will, isolated indeed from intercourse with outward things, but in themselves more vivid than ever. Then the soul drops at once to the bank of Acheron or the mouth of Tiber, becomes aware of its destination, and reflects itself upon an aerial body, flame- or rainbow-like, and through the instrumentality of this aerial body renews its intercourse with the outer world and the experiences of sense. They have now reached the topmost circle, which is filled with flames, save a narrow outward margin on which the poets march, single file, and whereon Dante must take good heed to his steps; so that he can give but broken attention to the souls who commemorate examples of chastity from the midst of the glowing heat.

Hindrance to our ascent there now was none,
For, by the sun, meridian's arc was given
Unto the Bull, by night to the Scorpion.

Wherefore as one who goes and halts not even 4
Upon his way, whatever he may see,
If by necessity's sharp spur he's driven,

So by the gap we entered all the three; 7
And one by one climbed upward by the stair
So strait, its climbers parted all must be.

And as the little stork would try the air, 10
And lifts its wing, but drops it shortly then,
Because to leave the nest, it doth not dare;

CANTO XXV

181

So wish to ask was lit and quenched again, 13
And yet I moved, (so far my longing went,)
As moves a man who is for speaking fain.

My father sweet, on going still intent, 16
Although the pace was swift, "Loose now," he said,
"The bow that thou hast to the iron bent."

Safely thereat my mouth I openèd, 19
And said beginning, "How can one grow lean,
"Where need of food is not a thing to dread?"

He said, "So difficult this had not been 22
"Wouldst thou remember Meleager, how
"As the brand wasted, wasting he was seen;

"And if thou'ldst think how doth your image now 25
"Flit in the glass, e'en as ye move away,
"That which seems hard to thee, would easy grow.

"But that all peace upon thy longing stay, 28
"Lo! here is Statius, and that he heal
"Thy wounds, behold I ask him now and pray.

"If in thy presence, I may yet reveal 31
"Eternal things he's seen, excuse must lie,"
Said Statius, "in the fact of thy appeal."

Then he began, "Son if thy mind will try, 34
"And heed my words, a light from them thou'lt gain,
"Upon the 'how' thou utterdest recently.

- “ The perfect blood which by the thirsty vein 37
“ Is never drunk, and so is left behind,
“ Like food removed, which has o’ the table lain,

“ Can in the heart informing virtue find 40
“ For all the human members, like that flood
“ Which, to become these, through the veins doth wind.

“ Again refined, it sinks where speech less good 43
“ Than silence is, and thence distils within
“ The natural vessel, on another’s blood.

“ There one with the other mingles; one is seen 46
“ Passive, and one full of activities,
“ Since in a perfect place it did begin.

“ It first coagulates, then vivifies 49
“ That which, to make its own material,
“ It, being joined thereto, solidifies.

“ The active virtue, (made thus to a soul, 52
“ Such as a plant hath, yet here different,
“ Since that on its way is, this has found its goal)

“ Then works so that it moves, is sentient, 55
“ Like a sea-fungus; then for the powers whose seed
“ It is, doth organise development.

“ Now, son, expands, now spreads abroad indeed, 58
“ The worth of the begetter’s heart, whence all
“ Our limbs, by Nature’s intent, do proceed.

- “ Yet seest thou not how doth the animal 61
“ Become a man; this is that point whereat
“ Did one more wise than thou, in error fall;
- “ And so his doctrine sought to separate 64
“ The intellect from the soul, since manifest
“ No organ was, wherewith the soul could mate.
- “ Now to the truth that comes, throw wide thy breast!
“ And know that when the shaping of the brain 68
“ Within the embryo has reached its best,
- “ The first great Mover turneth to it, fain 70
“ At Nature’s work, and breathing on it, gives
“ A spirit new, with virtue filled, and then
- “ All which it finds there active, it contrives 73
“ To draw to it, and to one soul doth grow,
“ That circles on itself, and feels and lives.
- “ And if less marvel from my words thou’dst know, 76
“ Think of the sun’s heat, how ’tis made to wine,
“ Blent with the juice that from the grapes doth flow.
- “ And when Lachesis hath no thread to twine, 79
“ It slips the flesh, and so away doth bear
“ Within its worth, the human and divine;
- “ Mute all the other powers are whatsoe’er; 82
“ But memory, intelligence and will,
“ In action keener far than e’er they were.

- “ Halting not, of itself it falls, until 85
“ One of the shores it wondrously hath found;
“ There first it learns what place it hath to fill.
- “ As soon as this is well defined, around 88
“ Radiates the shaping force, in quantity
“ And mode as in the living limbs 'tis bound.
- “ And as the air, heavy with rain, we see 91
“ In diverse colours decked, because of rays
“ Reflected in it; e'en so presently
- “ The neighbouring air doth set itself and stays 94
“ In that form which the soul, abiding there,
“ Stamps on it and its virtue thus displays.
- “ And as the flame followeth everywhere 97
“ The fire, wherever it may move, e'en so
“ Its new form is the spirit's follower.
- “ Since from the spirit it derives its show 100
“ 'Tis called a shade; therefrom for every sense,
“ Even to sight, an organ doth it grow.
- “ By this we speak, our laughter springs from thence,
“ By this the sighs and tears come from our breast,
“ That round the mountain thou hast heard perchance.
- “ And as by our desires we are oppressed, 106
“ Or other loves, e'en so the shade is wrought;
“ This causes all whereat thou marvellest.”

Now to the last of all the turnings brought 109
Were we, and wheeled to the right hand about,
And other care at our attention caught.

Here from the bank, flashes the fire flame out, 112
And the edge breathes an upward blast withal,
Which throws it back and keeps a space without.

Wherefore along the shielded side, we all 115
Must go in file, and here the fire I dread,
And there I fear lest downward I should fall.

"Now doth this place demand," my leader said, 118
"That with tight rein upon thine eyes, thou go,
"Lest to a false step lightly thou be led."

"Summae Deus clementiae," in the glow 121
I heard, e'en in the core of that great blaze,
Whence longing there to turn, began to grow.

And spirits saw I, tread the flaming ways; 124
At them and at my steps, I looked therefore,
From time to time dividing thus my gaze.

And when the hymn to its full ending wore, 127
Then, "Virum non cognosco," cried they shrill;
And softly so began the hymn once more.

And at its end they cried; "Diana still 130
"Kept to the wood, and chased forth Helice,
"Who had of Venus' poison felt the thrill."

Then sang again; and then to chastity 133
Of men and women, witness did they bear,
As virtue and as marriage look to see.

I think this fashion doth suffice them there, 136
Until this time of burning fire be past;
They must endure such sustenance and care,

Until the final wound be healed at last. 139

CANTO XXVI

THE flames redden under Dante's shadow and the amazed souls gather to him, careful, however, not to issue from the flame. One of them has barely questioned Dante, when a group, circling the mountain in the opposite direction, meets them with a brief salutation, and each group alike proclaims a warning example of lust; after which they sweep past each other like flocks of birds, and continue to utter the wail and song suited to their state. But this does not prevent their drawing again to Dante, who tells them his tale and questions them as to their state. When the souls have somewhat recovered from their amazement, one of them explains that the group accompanying the poet failed to restrain their carnal appetites within the limits prescribed by the social institutions of humanity, whereas the other group had not even observed the laws laid down by nature. Dante's interlocutor is Guido Guinicelli, the founder (or precursor) of the new style of Tuscan poetry, the father of Dante and of his betters; to whom Dante renders his passionate homage of affection and loyalty. But he points to the shade of the Troubadour Arnaut Daniel as superior to himself and superior to all Provençal rivals by as much as the new Tuscan school excels the old school of Guittone of Arezzo. Then, with a petition for Dante's prayers, he yields his place to Arnaut himself; who tells of his state, in his own Provençal tongue; and in his turn implores Dante's prayers.

Whilst thus we trod the brink around the hill,
In single file, and oft my Master said,
"Take heed, and trust thee now unto my skill,"

On my right shoulder were the sunbeams shed; 4
By whose bright rays the west was changing fast
To dazzling white, where late the azure spread.

And lo! my shadow on the fire flames cast, 7
Made them seem redder: as they grew aware
Of this, the shadows marvelled as they passed.

This cause it was set them first speaking there 10
Of me, and one to the other would exclaim,
“ No shadowy body seemeth he to wear.”

And then towards me certain of them came, 13
As far as yet they could, always with heed
Not to come forth beyond the burning flame.

“ O thou that not perchance through slower speed, 16
“ But reverent, dost on the others wait,
“ Answer me where in thirst and fire I plead.

“ And not my want alone thy words will sate; 19
“ More thirst is in all these than water cold
“ In Indian or Ethiop could create;

“ How thus against the sun, let us be told, 22
“ Thou mak'st thyself a wall, as earlier when
“ The nets of death had not made good their hold.”

So spake there one, and I would have again 25
Revealed myself, had I not been amazed,
At a new strangeness that appeared then.

CANTO XXVI

189

For lo! along the road that flaming blazed 28
Facing the other way, a people went
Whereat I paused, and wondering I gazed.

Each side I saw the eager shades intent, 31
Hasten and kiss each other and pass on,
As though brief greeting gave them full content.

E'en so within their dark battalion, 34
One ant rubs muzzle with another, so
To spy perchance how way or fortune's won.

Soon as their friendly greetings ended, lo! 37
Ere the first onward steps can lead them by,
Each strives a louder shout aloft to throw.

The new ones, "Sodom and Gomorrah," cry, 40
The rest, "Pasiphaë enters the cow,
"That so the young bull to her lust may fly."

Then as the cranes, part to the mountains' brow 43
Rhipæan, sweep, and part toward the sand,
These shunning frost, and those the sunshine now;

One people goes while comes the other band, 46
And weeping turns unto the former song,
And to the cry for their advantage planned.

Then as before, about me did there throng, 49
They who had formerly entreated me,
And eagerness to hear seemed in them strong.

- I, who their wish twice over now might see, 52
Began, " O souls, who are assured the gain
" Of peace, sometime, what time soe'er it be,
- " Nor green nor ripe, do limbs of mine remain 55
" There yonder, but are with me as before,
" And mortal blood and mortal joints retain.
- " Hence upward go I to be blind no more; 58
" A heavenly lady winneth for us grace,
" Whence through your world I bring my body o'er.
- " But that your greater need at swifter pace 61
" Move to content, till in that heaven ye dwell,
" Filled full with love, and wrought in amplest space,
- " That I may trace it yet on paper, tell 64
" Who are ye, and what throng is that, that here
" Behind your backs is hastening so well? "
- Not otherwise than the dazed mountaineer 67
Is troubled, and all speechlessly will stare,
When rough and wild in towns he doth appear,
- So showed each shade to me in seeming there; 70
But when bewilderment was laid aside,
(Since lofty hearts full soon grow free of care,)
- The shade that first did ask of me, replied; 73
" Blest art thou, who, that better life abound,
" Dost take aboard news of our country wide.

" In them who come not with us, sin was found, 76
" For which of old Caesar in triumph heard
" ' Regina,' called against him, all around.

" Therefore they leave us, crying ' Sodom,' word 79
" That as thou noted, brings their sin to light,
" That by their shame the burning may be spurred.

" Our sin in foulness was hermaphrodite; 82
" But since in human law we had no root
" And like the beasts pursued our appetite,

" When we depart, our infamy to suit, 85
" By us is called aloud the name of her,
" Who in a brutelike form became a brute.

" Now knowest thou our deeds, how black they were;
" If thou would'st have our names, though I might
 spend 89
" The time thereon, my ignorance would err.

" But thy desire of me I will befriend; 91
" Lo, Guido Guinicelli, purged thus wise,
" For full repentance made before mine end."

As bowed the sons, before their mother's eyes, 94
In that great sorrow which Lycurgus bore,
So then did I, but not so far I rise,

Hearing the name of the progenitor 97
Of me, and others worthier than I,
Who sweet and graceful rhymes of love out-pour;

Not speaking, nor yet hearing, thoughtfully 100
I went, and long to gaze on him was fain,
Yet for the fire, I dared not draw anigh.

When of beholding I was sated, then, 103
I offered all my service for his aid,
Adding the oath compelling faith in men.

And he to me, "Thou leavest traces made 106
"By what I learn, so clear, that Lethe ne'er,
"Shall take away or make them dimly fade.

"But if 'tis truth, thy words this moment swear, 109
"Tell me what reason is it makes thee show
"In speech and glance, for me, such loving care."

And I to him, "Your sweet songs move me so, 112
"Which while the present use endures, so long,
"Will on their very ink great worth bestow."

"O, brother," said he, "this one of the throng, 115
"I show thee," (here his finger did advance,)
"Was better craftsman of the mother-tongue;

"In verse of love and prose tales of romance, 118
"All he surpassed, let fools talk as they may,
"Who give him of Limoges the favouring glance.

"To rumour more than truth they turn away 121
"Their countenance, and firm opinions wed,
"Ere art or reason to their hearing pray.

CANTO XXVI

193

" So with Guittone were our fathers led 124

" Away, shouting and praising him alone,

" But truth at last with most hath conquerèd.

" Now if such ample privilege be known, 127

" To let thee go into that cloistered shade,

" Where Christ in college holds the abbots' throne,

" There be a paternoster for me said, 130

" Such as necessity in this world shows,

" Where power to sin in us aside is laid."

Then haply for another following close 133

To make due room, he vanished thro' the fire,

As to the depths, a fish, through water goes.

Then tow'rds the one he shewed me drew I nigher,
And said that for his name, a grateful place 137

Already was prepared by my desire.

Thereon at once he spoke with willing grace, 139

" Your courteous request so makes me friend,

" I neither can, nor will, conceal my race.

" Arnault I am, that weep, and singing wend, 142

" In thought I see my madness that is past,

" And see with joy the day some time will send;

" I pray you by that goodness which at last 145

" Guides to the summit of the stairs incline,

" Keep memory of my pain forever fast."

Then hid he, in the fire that doth refine. 148

CANTO XXVII

NIGHT had already fallen on the foot of the mountain when the angel of the circle greeted the poets and pronounced the blessing on the pure in heart. When summoned to cross the flame Dante recalls with horror the sight he had ere now witnessed of men burned to death; and remains deaf to all Virgil's appeals, till the utterance of Beatrice's name at last overcomes his reluctance; whereat Virgil, for reasons of his own, smiles as we smile at a child that knows not what he seeks. Then Virgil, Dante, and Statius enter the awful burning, Dante comforted by Virgil's discourse of Beatrice and by the welcome and blessing of the angel at the further side. Meanwhile the shadow of night has been creeping up the mountain, and before they have ascended many of the steps which they are now climbing, it swallows the poet's shadow, and he is bereft of power further to ascend. Each of the pilgrims makes a stair his couch, and Dante, like a goat between two shepherds, sees the great stars shine brighter than their wont, as he drops into such a sleep as sees the things that are to be. Towards daybreak he has a vision of Leah, the type of the active life, singing of herself and her sister Rachael, the type of the contemplative life. Now nigh to his immediate goal, he awakes with the morning, and Virgil tells him that he is at last to gather that fruit of liberty which he has so long been seeking; and when he has mounted eagerly to the summit of the stair his guide informs him that his function is now discharged, for they have reached the goal of Purgatory. Dante has recovered from the dire effects of the fall of man; his will is free, unwarped and sound; he has no further need of direction or directive institutions; he has reached the goal of all imperial and ecclesiastical organisation and is king and bishop of himself.

As when the sun with his first radiance hails
The place where once was shed his Maker's blood,
While Ebro falls beneath the lofty Scales,

And noon-day heat scorches the Ganges flood, 4
Thus stood he now; so day drew near its close,
When God's glad angel 'fore our vision stood.

He crowned the bank which past the flames uprose, 7
" *Beati mundo corde* " singing there,
No voice of ours hath living notes like those.

Then, " Hallowed souls, no further may ye fare, 10
" Except the fire has bitten, have no dread,
" But to the songs beyond give all your care."

Thus as we came more near to him, he said; 13
And I became, when his behest I learned,
As one who in the sepulchre is laid.

With fast clasped hands, forward my face I turned, 16
Gazing upon the fire, imaging clear
The human bodies I had once seen burned.

The kindly escorts came toward me near, 19
And Virgil said to me " O son mine own,
" Here may be torment, but no death to fear.

" Remember ah! remember—if alone 22
" On Geryon to safety I could guide,
" What shall I now do, nearer to God's throne?

" Believe it surely, though thou shouldst abide 25
" A thousand years within this womb of flame,
" Not to a single hair would harm betide.

" And if thou deem'st me guileful, then to them 28
" Draw nearer, till a sure belief thou hast,
" With thy hands held upon thy garments' hem.

" Fight down thy fear, ah! banish it at last, 31
" Turn hither, come in all security."
Torn by accusing conscience I stood fast.

When rooted, stubborn, still he noted me; 34
Troubled a little, " See, my son," he said,
" This wall doth rise 'twixt Beatrice and thee."

As Thisbe's name made Pyramus, near dead, 37
Open his eyes and gaze her features o'er,
Then when the mulberry put on its red;

So then my stubbornness to softness wore; 40
I faced the wise one, as that name did move
Which in my heart springs up for evermore.

Whereon his head he shook, and said to prove, 43
" How, shall we stay this side? " and smiled as they
Whose gifts of apples win a child to love.

Then in the fire before me led the way, 46
Entreating Statius to fall behind,
Who long ere this betwixt us both did stay.

CANTO XXVII

197

Being entered there I well had been inclined, 49
To fling myself in molten glass for cold,
So measureless the burning I did find.

My father sweet, to comfort me, still told 52
Of Beatrice, and ceased not as he went,
And said, " Her eyes already I behold."

A voice that sang beyond due guidance lent, 55
And only eager for its blessing, we
Came forth, there where began the steep ascent.

" Venite benedicti patris mei," 58
Sounded from midmost of a flame so bright,
That vanquished eyes could not endure to see.

" The sun is sinking, draweth near the night," 61
He added, " Stay not, mend your paces slow,
" Ere yet the west grow dark and lose its light."

Straight through the rock, upward the path did go, 64
Toward such a part, I threw a lengthening shade
Before me from the sunbeams slanting low.

Few steps the sages and myself essayed, 67
Ere set of sun behind us we perceived,
Since vanished all the shadow erstwhile made:

And ere one hue to the horizon cleaved, 70
In all the range of its immensity,
And night her rule o'er all her realms achieved,

- Each, from the steps, chose one a bed to be; 73
The mountain's law took from us so the might
To mount, though our desire remained free.
- As goats wax swift and wanton on the height, 76
Ere they are fed, but tame will shortly grow,
When ruminating while the sun is bright,
- Silent within the shade that shields the glow; 79
Watched by the shepherd, as he leaneth there
Upon his staff, and leaning, minds them so;
- And as the herdsman, in the open air 82
All night holds silent watch his flock beside;
And lest a wild beast scatter it hath care;
- So were we then all three that eventide; 85
I, as the goat, my shepherds two between,
Whom the high rocks from all things else divide.
- But little of the world without was seen; 88
But in that little flashed full many a star,
Bigger and brighter than its wont had been.
- So ruminating, gazing thus afar, 91
Sleep came upon me; sleep that oft can learn
The tidings, ere the facts in being are.
- That hour that Cytherea may discern, 94
First from the east upon the mountain beam,
She who e'er seems with fire of love to burn,

CANTO XXVII

199

A lady young and fair, methought in dream, 97
Was going gathering flowers along a plain,
And as she went, thus singing did she seem:

“ Know, whosoe’er that of my name is fain, 100
“ That I am Leah, and go amid the grass,
“ Moving my hands so fair, garlands to gain;

“ I deck me here, to please me at the glass; 103
“ But never will Rachel, my sister, stir,
“ But ’fore her mirror sits, while long days pass.

“ I with my hands am fain to minister, 106
“ As she is to behold her lovely eyes;
“ Me, action pleases; contemplation, her.”

Now at the brightness which more glad doth rise, 109
Coming before the dawn, to pilgrim men,
As nearer to their home their lodging lies,

The shadows all around took flight again, 112
And my sleep with them; wherefore I arose,
Seeing my Masters great were risen then.

“ That sweet fruit for whose sake men’s longing goes
“ Seeking o’er many boughs, shall give to-day, 116
“ That peace to hunger, which fulfilment knows.”

Words such as these there heard I Virgil say, 118
And ne’er for any gifts could aught inspire,
A sweetness like to that which herein lay.

So on me came desire upon desire 121
To be above; at every step I won
Pinions, new growing for the flying high'r.

When all the stairway was beneath us run, 124
And on the topmost step our striving bore,
Virgil gazed fast on me, and said, " My son,

" The temporal fire now have thine eyes passed o'er,
" And the eternal; now thou'st reached the state 128
" Where of myself, I can discern no more.

" With wit and skill I've brought thee to this gate;
" Thy pleasure be thy guide henceforth, and now 131
" Free art thou of the steep ways, free of the strait.

" See there the sun that shineth on thy brow, 133
" The tender grass, the flowers and bushes rise,
" That here the earth from its own power can grow.

" While yet are coming the glad lovely eyes, 136
" That weeping moved my will thy guide to be;
" Wander thou mayst, or rest in waiting guise.

" Await no more a word or sign from me; 139
" Free, sane, and upright, now thy will hath grown,
" And not to follow it were sin in thee;

" Wherefore I set on thee mitre and crown." 142

CANTO XXVIII

DANTE enters the Garden of Eden from the west, facing the rising sun, and meeting a sweet breeze laden with the odours of Paradise and full of the song of birds to which the leaves of the divine forest murmur a pedal bass. On the opposing bank of a stream that flows pure under the forest shade, he perceives a lady gathering flowers and singing, as enamoured. It is Matilda, the genius of Eden; and in answer to Dante's petition she approaches the stream with downcast eyes, the song on her lips growing ever more articulate. Then, her hands still busy with the flowers, she flings upon him the blaze of her laughing eyes. As a responsive rapture awakes in Dante's heart, she initiates him into the frank and innocent love and joy of Eden, and proffers all further service he may desire. In answer to his question she confirms what Statius had already said as to the higher regions of the mount above the gate being unaffected by meteorological phenomena. The stream and the breeze, therefore, are not such as those on earth. The breeze is caused by the sweep of the atmospheric envelope of the earth, from east to west, with the *primum mobile*; and it bears with it germs from the divine forest; which may explain the seeming spontaneous generation of wondrous plants on earth. And the water of the stream does not rise from the pulsations of any mist- and rain-fed vein, but issues from a fountain which draws supplies for this and a companion stream direct from the will of God. These streams are Lethe and Eunoë, the one of which washes away all memory of sin, and the other restores the memory of all righteous doing; and for the full effect to be experienced, both alike must be tasted. So much in answer to Dante's questions. But Matilda further delights her pupil by suggesting that

some confused tradition of the state of innocence lay behind the dreams of the classical poets who sang of the Golden Age; whereon he sees a smile of recognition lighten the faces of Virgil and Statius.

Eager to search within and every way
The divine forest, living, dense, whereby
Was tempered to mine eyes the newborn day,

I lingered not the mountain's edge anigh, 4
But slowly, slowly o'er the plain I went,
Which everywhere breathes fragrance constantly.

A gentle air, that never seemèd spent, 7
Met me and softly played about my head,
Like a soft wind and made me well content,

To which the branches trembling answerèd, 10
And all together bent tow'rd the region where
The holy mountain's shadow first is shed.

Yet not so far the tree-tops bended were 13
From their uprightness, that the birds' gay throng
Need cease to practise all their graces there;

But singing as the first breeze swept along, 16
With joy they welcomed it, 'mid leafy shade,
Whose murmuring kept the burden to their song,

As gathering from bough to bough 'tis made 19
Throughout the pine woods on Chiassi's shore,
If Aeolus loose Scirocco through the glade.

CANTO XXVIII

203

Already my slow steps had borne me o'er 22
A space so great that ancient wood within,
That where I entered, I could see no more,

When right across my path a stream was seen, 25
Which leftward turned, with every little wave,
That bent the grass which made its margins green.

All purest waters that this world can have, 28
Compared with this, which hideth nought, must show
Some dimness in them, potent to deprave.

Albeit darkly, darkly doth it flow, 31
Beneath the everlasting shade, which ne'er
Lets sun or moon-beam penetrate below.

I stayed my feet, and looked away from there, 34
Beyond the little stream, in wonderment
At all the blossoms so diversely fair,

And there appeared, (as things are sometimes sent, 37
So suddenly to view, that as we greet,
All other thought is altogether spent,)

A Lady, all alone and singing sweet,
Who gathered flower on flower, as she did move
Along the path they painted 'neath her feet.

" Ah, Lady fair, who in the rays of love 43
 " Dost warm thee, if I trust what doth appear,
 " Which oft a witness to the heart will prove,

"Be pleased," I said to her, "to draw more near 46

"Toward this river, till as thou dost sing,

"My mind may understand what I shall hear.

"In truth through thee I am remembering 49

"Proserpina, both where and what was she,

"Whose mother lost her when *she* lost the Spring."

As turns a lady dancing cunningly, 52

With feet scarce lifted, close together bound,

And foot in front of foot scarce moveth she;

Where flowerets red and golden decked the ground, 55

With downcast eyes, as might a modest maid,

Toward me, where I stood, she turned her round,

And gave contentment to the prayer I prayed, 58

Drawing anear me, till the sound so sweet

Reached me with all its meaning clear displayed.

When stood she where the grass beneath her feet, 61

Is bathed already by the fair stream's wave,

She gave me grace her gentle eyes to greet.

Ne'er I believe shone forth a light more brave, 64

'Neath Venus' eyelids piercèd by her son

Against his wont; and then a smile she gave,

From the high further bank she stood upon, 67

Gathering more flowers with her hands outspread,

Which without seed in that high land are won.

CANTO XXVIII

205

Three paces by the river sunderèd 70
Were we, but Hellespont where Xerxes crossed,
(Still to this day a curb man's pride must dread),

'Twixt Sestos and Abydos tempest tossed, 73
Less hatred from Leander's heart endured,
Than that from me, since passage there was lost.

" Newcomers ye, perchance yet ill assured," 76
So she began, " Why in this place I smile,
" The nest for all the human race secured.

" Some doubt doth hold you marvelling awhile; 79
" But the psalm ' Delectasti ' light can lend,
" To clear the mist that doth your mind beguile.

" And thou who art in front and prayer would send,
" Say if aught else thou'dst hear; lo! here am I, 83
" Ready to solve thy doubts, till need shall end."

I said, " The water and the forest's sigh, 85
" Fight with a new belief that I have heard,
" Which to their presence seemeth contrary."

Then she, " The thing that troubles thee, my word 88
" Shall render plain, and from thy mind I'll drive
" The mist through whose confusion thou hast erred:

" The highest Good, His pleasure to contrive, 91
" Good and for goodness made man, and this place
" For earnest of eternal peace did give.

" Through his default he sojourned here short space,
" Through his default, for toil and grief and sighs, 95
" He bartered play so sweet and laughter's grace.

" And that the storms (which from the vapours rise
" Of earth and water in that world of yours, 98
" Which go toward heat as far as in them lies)

" Should wage no war on man, this mountain soars
" Tow'rd heaven to this height, and standeth fair 101
" Above them, e'en from where are locked its doors.

" Now since in circuit wheeleth all the air 103
" With primal motion, save in sweeping round,
" Its circling course be broken anywhere;

" Since that this mountain wholly free is found 106
" In the pure air, this motion striketh straight,
" And as the wood is dense, it makes it sound.

" Thereon the smitten plants can impregnate 109
" The air with their own virtue, and on high
" Wheeling, it scatters wide its wondrous freight.

" The other ground conceiving presently, 112
" Bears divers plants with diverse virtues, e'en
" As worth is found in it and in its sky.

" No marvel therefore should it be, I ween, 115
" If this is grasped, when any plant soe'er
" Yonder takes root although no seed is seen.

- “ And thou must know the blessèd country, where 118
“ Thou art, is filled with every kind of seed,
“ And fruit more wondrous than the earth can bear.
- “ The water, that thou seest, doth not proceed 121
“ From springs which moisture feeds condensed by
 cold,
“ As streams that wax and wane in volume need;
- “ But is by sources constant, sure, controlled, 124
“ And by God’s will ever as much regaineth,
“ As freely is on either side outrolled.
- “ By virtue of this side that flows, there waneth, 127
“ In men, the memory of every sin;
“ By that, the thought of all good deeds remaineth.
- “ On this side Lethe doth the work begin, 130
“ On that Eunoë, nor can aught be done,
“ Save from this side and that a draught ye win.
- “ Above all savours pleasing is this one; 133
“ And though all sated now thy thirst may be,
“ E’en if no more revealment be begun,
- “ As grace I give yet this corollary; 136
“ Nor that my words will please thee less, I deem,
“ If they exceed the promise made to thee.
- “ They through whose rhymes of long ago doth gleam
“ The age of gold, and all its deep content, 140
“ Haply of this did on Parnassus dream.

" The root of man's race here was innocent, 142

" Here every fruit endureth, and the Spring;

" This is the nectar that the poets meant."

Then to my poets full of questioning, 145

I turned me fully, and I saw them fain

To smile, the last conclusion welcoming;

Then on the lady fair, I looked again. 148

CANTO XXIX

As she chants a blessing on those whose sins are forgiven, Matilda takes her way along one bank of the stream, while Dante keeps pace with her on the other; till the air, kindling with splendour and laden with sweet strains of song, fills Dante at once with rapture of the Earthly Paradise and a sense of indignation against the act of sin which had bereft him and mankind of such delights—delights which all the waters of Helicon can scarce enable him to set in verse. Dante is pacing eastward, with the stream on his left hand flowing towards him, and on the other side of the stream a divine pageant approaches him; the details of which, together with words of song, are gradually disentangled by eye and ear. But when he turns to Virgil for enlightenment, his faithful teacher can no longer instruct him; these are things beyond the reach of his art. Seven lights leave the air painted with seven great rainbow streamers of colour stretching away as far as the eye can reach, throwing their glory over the heaven and glowing upon the stream. They represent the sevenfold gifts of the spirit, and beneath their glory tread four and twenty elders, crowned with lilies, representing the books of the Old Testament, chanting blessings on the Virgin. They are followed by the four Gospel beasts as described by Ezekiel and John, enclosing between them the triumphal chariot of the Church, resting on the two wheels of the contemplative and active life, drawn by a grifon whose twofold nature represents the two natures in one person of Christ. The sun itself has not so glorious a chariot. By the right wheel the three theological virtues dance, and by the left the four cardinal virtues. Then come two elders, then four, then one, crowned with roses, representing the remaining books of the New Testament. When Dante is just opposite the car, a peal of thunder arrests the whole procession.

She made an end of speech, then 'gan once more
Singing, as might a lady deep in love,
" How blessed are they whose sins are covered o'er."

And as the nymphs who solitary rove 4
Through woodland shadows, wishing, one to hide
Far from the sun, and one his rays to prove,

Against the stream, and keeping by its side, 7
Onward she passed, and I abreast in line,
While little step to little step replied.

Less than a hundred were her steps and mine, 10
When both the banks bent round in such a way,
That to the eastward must my course incline.

Nor far thereafter might our footsteps stray, 13
Before the lady turned her face on me,
And " Look, my brother, hearken well; " did say.

And lo! a brightness flooded suddenly, 16
In every part, the forest great and close;
I doubted whether lightning it might be.

But since that lightning e'en in coming goes, 19
And this endured, more shining to perceive,
I said in thought, " What thing is this that glows? "

And a sweet melody straightway did cleave 22
The luminous air; whence zeal of righteous bent
Made me reprove the daring deed of Eve,

CANTO XXIX

211

Who with an earth and heaven obedient, 25
 Woman alone and but a moment made,
 To bide 'neath any veil was ill content;

If God's commandment she had but obeyed, 28
 Those joys ineffable I should have known
 Long since, and longer far amid them stayed.

Whilst 'mid such first fruits in my pathway thrown 31
 Of the delight eternal, in suspense,
 Desiring flowers of joy as yet unblown,

Before us even as a fire immense, 34
 The air beneath the verdant boughs became,
 And the sweet sound in chanting issued thence.

O holy virgins! if in your sacred name, 37
 Hunger or cold or vigils e'er I bore,
 Occasion spurs me now reward to claim.

Meet is't for me that Helicon should pour, 40
 Urania with her choir give aid in this,
 That verse to things too hard for thought may soar.

A space beyond, rose seven golden trees; 43
 Or so to eyes deceived they seemed to be,
 So great 'twixt us and them the distances.

But when I nearer came, and well could see, 46
 In the main outline, which can sense deceive,
 Features which distance hid no more from me,

That power which feedeth reason, could believe 49
That candlesticks the semblances would prove,
And in the song, Hosannah, could perceive.

The pageant gloriously flamed above, 52
Far brighter than the moon in midnight clear,
When she at mid-month through the sky doth move.

I turned me, mastered by amazement sheer, 55
To the good Virgil there, whose face replied,
Since on it, wonder did no less appear.

Back turned I to those beings glorified, 58
Which moved toward us at a pace so slow,
They would be vanquished by a new-wed bride.

The lady cried to me, " Why burn'st thou so, 61
" Just of the vivid lights to be aware,
" And seëst not those who behind them go? "

Then saw I folk clad in white raiment fair, 64
Whiter than mortal eyes e'er looked upon,
Who followed as it seemed their leaders there.

Upon my leftward hand the water shone, 67
My leftward side reflecting so my face,
Like to a mirror, when I looked thereon.

When on the bank I held my chosen place, 70
So that the stream alone kept me away,
Better to see, I stayed my eager pace.

Leaving the air behind them painted gay, 73
I saw the flames advancing in a row,
Like trailing pennons there, they seemed to sway;

The air above in seven bands did glow, 76
Streaked with the colours seven, which make bright
Both Delia's girdle, and the sun's own bow.

Far to the rearward streamed beyond my sight 79
Those banners, and as far as seemed to me,
The outermost ten paces sundered quite.

Beneath the sky I tell of, fair to see, 82
Grave elders four and twenty, two by two,
Advancing came, all crowned with fleur-de-lys,

And all were singing, " Blessings be thy due, 85
" Among all Adam's daughters, and be blessed
" Thy loveliness, eternal ages through."

When that the flowers and tender herbs that dressed
The other bank, that facing me did lie, 89
No longer by these chosen folk were pressed,

E'en as star follows star across the sky, 91
Four cr  atures behind them followed close,
Each wore a green leaf crown of majesty.

Six plum  d wings from every one arose, 94
The feathers full of eyes; lo! Argus' eyes,
If he were living, would be like to those.

- Reader, I spill no rhymes for such a prize, 97
As to describe them; lavish I cannot be,
Since other pressing needs do here arise,
- But read Ezekiel, who, as he did see, 100
Depicts them, coming from the regions cold,
With whirlwind cloud and flame in company.
- As in his pages then thou shalt behold, 103
So were they here, save for their wings, and there
John doth support the tale that I have told.
- A car triumphal, which two wheels did bear, 106
The space between the four contained, and lo!
Drawn at a grifon's neck, forth did it fare.
- Upwards he stretched one wing and the other, so 109
That none they hurt in cleaving, while between
The middle banner and each three they go.
- So high they rose they could not all be seen; 112
The parts formed as a bird bright gold did grace,
The others, white, mixed with vermilion's sheen.
- Ne'er Africanus pleased the Roman race, 115
Nor yet Augustus, with so fair a car;
The sun's beside it would seem mean and base,
- The sun's, consumed once as it strayed afar, 118
At prayer devout that did from earth aspire,
When Jove mysterious made righteous war

Three ladies dancing in a round, came nigh'r, 121
By the right wheel; the first was all so red,
Scarcely would she be noted in the fire;

The next in flesh and bones it might be said 124
Was made of emerald, in very deed;
The third, of snow new fallen seemèd made.

And now they seemed as though the white did lead,
And now the red, and as her song did rise, 128
Or slow, or quick, the others took their speed.

By the left wheel were four in festal guise, 130
And clad in purple; one as leader went,
Who carried in her head, I saw, three eyes.

After the group on whom this tale is spent, 133
Two agèd men I saw, unlike in dress,
But like in bearing, grave and reverent.

One shewed as a disciple and no less 136
Of great Hippocrates, whom Nature made
To help the creatures whom she most would bless.

The other with a sharp and glittering blade, 139
Showed that he held an office contrary,
So that this side the stream I felt afraid.

Then saw I four of deep humility, 142
And behind all, with subtle face and mien
An agèd man, rapt in his fantasy.

These seven were clad as the first group had been 145
That passed, but here around each reverend head
No garlands made of lilies could be seen,

Rather of roses, and such flowers red, 148
That from a distance one would swear that flame
It was, wherewith their brows were garlanded.

And when the car right o'er against me came, 151
A thunder clap was heard; no further passed
At this command those folk of noble fame,

But with the first ensigns they halted fast. 154

CANTO XXX

WHEN the car arrests itself, all the elders who had preceded it, turn and face round to it; and when one of them invokes the bride of Lebanon, blessed spirits rise up around it, as men shall rise at the last day. Flowers are flung in a cloud from their hands as they utter blessings, culled from Christian and Gentile scriptures; and a form clad in the colours of the three theological virtues rises like the sun in their midst. Dante without further testimony from his eyes, recognises the tokens of the ancient flame, and like a terrified child turns round to ask comfort and support from Virgil. But Virgil has gone, and not even the joys of the Earthly Paradise can prevent Dante's cheeks, though cleansed by the mountain dew, from darkening again with tears. But the sense of outward loss when bereft of Virgil is soon swallowed up in the sense of inward loss caused by his own faithlessness and sin; for Beatrice sternly recalls him to face his own insulted and outraged ideal. Bereft of Virgil's support when he looks around, encountering his own image in the stream when he looks down, like a child before an angered mother, Dante feels his heart at first frozen by reproaches, then melted by the pleading intercession of the angels. But Beatrice is still unbending; and turning to the angelic presences she rehearses the promise of Dante's youth and the unworthiness of his manhood, the gracious and fleeting beauty of his early vows, the pursuit of false good to which he then surrendered himself, her own unavailing pleadings with him, and his fall, so deep that naught save the vision of the region of the lost, won for him by her prayers and tears, could avail to save him. The deep fate of God were broken should he taste of the higher joys, access to which she had won for him, without paying some scot of penitential tears.

When now the wain of the first Heaven of all,
Which knew not setting or arising e'er,
Nor cloud except the veil by sin let fall,

Which gave true warning unto each one there 4
Of duty, (even as the lower wain
Safe through the harbour guides the mariner),

When it stood fast—lo! Truth's own people then, 7
(Who first twixt grifon and car had thronged the ways),
Turned to the car as they of peace were fain.

And one, as sent from Heaven broke forth in praise:
"Veni, sponsa, de Libano," he cried 11
Three times, and all the rest the song did raise.

As at the final trump, from far and wide, 13
Each from his grave the saints shall rise and sing
With newborn voices, "God be glorified!"

So saw I on the car divine up-spring 16
A hundred then, "ad vocem tanti senis,"
The message of eternal Life to bring.

There cried they all: "Benedictus, qui venis," 19
And strewing flowers round about the way,
"Manibus o date lilia plenis."

As I have seen e'er now at dawn of day, 22
The eastern heavens coloured rosy red,
While all the rest both clear and fair will stay;

And how the sun's face rises shadowèd, 25
So that for long the eye endures its power,
So tempered is it in its misty bed;

Thus where from hands angelic many a flower, 28
Thrown high, made as it were a cloud of light
And fell, without, within, in fragrant shower,

Fair crowned with olive o'er a veil of white, 31
A lady clad, beneath a mantle green,
In hue of living flame, broke on my sight.

Thereat, my spirit, that long years had seen, 34
Since in her presence, (though for that it yearned,)
Trembling and struck with awe it well had been,

(Ere yet mine eyes a greater knowledge learned) 37
Through hidden virtue that went forth from her,
Felt how the mastery of old love returned.

When that high worth, which in the days that were,
While yet I was a boy, had pierced me through, 41
Smote on mine eyes in its true character,

I turned to my left hand with trust as true 43
As makes the child run to his mother's knee,
When he is hurt, or fears things strange and new,

To say to Virgil: "Of the blood in me, 46
"Less than a drachm is left that trembles not;
"I know the flame of old so certainly."

But vainly now for Virgil's aid I sought, 49
Virgil, sweet father, Virgil to whose care,
I gave myself to save my soul distraught.

Not all that our first mother lost, could there 52
Have worth enough, to keep my dew-washed face
From darkening with the tears of my despair.

"Dante, that Virgil leaves thee in this place, 55
"Weep not as yet, weep not as yet, for now
"Thy tears must win another sword to grace."

As is an admiral, who at poop and prow 58
Reviews the men, the other ships aboard,
And gives them heart to do brave deeds enow,

So as I turned the car's left side toward, 61
Hearing my name sounded so clear and free,
Which of necessity I here record,

I saw that lady, whom I first did see 64
All veiled beneath the angelic festival,
Across the stream direct her eyes on me;

Albeit the veil that from her head did fall, 67
Crowned with the leaves Minerva loved of old,
Forbade me there to see her face at all.

Queenlike, and in her bearing stern and cold, 70
She spoke again, as one that does not cease,
But his most burning words keeps still untold:

“ Look at me well, I—I am Beatrice, 73
“ How didst thou dare approach this mountain-side?
“ Know’st thou not here the blest alone find peace? ”

I cast mine eyes down to the crystal tide, 76
But seeing myself, looked to the meadow near,
Such shame weigh down my forehead I descried.

As to the child the mother seems severe, 79
So seemed she then to me, for to the tongue
Bitter the taste of pity must appear.

She ceased, and sudden from the angelic throng 82
Did “ In te, Domine, speravi ” sound,
But beyond “ Pedes meos ” was not sung.

As snow, where are the living rafters found 85
Along Italia’s back, bleak winds will wreath,
In frosty stillness by their stress fast bound,

Then if the land that loseth shade shall breathe, 88
Straightway it melts, and trickling down appears
As doth the candle-wax the flame beneath,

So was I without sighs or any tears, 91
Before their wondrous song whose notes accord
E’er to the music of th’ eternal spheres;

But when I knew with what compassion stored 94
Were harmonies so sweet; as though they said,
“ Lady, ah! why must shame pursue thy word? ”

The ice that round my heart was fastenèd, 97
Was breath and water made; and lo, with pain,
Through mouth and eyes from out my breast 'twas
shed.

But she who on the same side did remain, 100
Standing beside the car, turned then to say,
And to the pitying spirits spake again:

“ O ye, who watch through never-ending day, 103
“ So that nor night, nor sleep, from you can steal
“ One step the world may make along its way;

“ Whence my reply must greater care reveal, 106
“ That he who yonder weeps may understand
“ How sin and sorrow in one measure deal;

“ Not only as the mighty wheels had planned, 109
“ That to some end each seed directing guide,
“ (E'en as companioned stars, lend each their hand,)

“ But by the Grace Divine, in wealth supplied, 112
“ (The grace that doth from higher clouds rain down
“ Than by our vision e'er can be descried,)

“ This man's youth had such virtue for a crown, 115
“ That had he willed, every good quality
“ Might well in him to wondrous proof have grown.

“ But so much ranker and more evilly, 118
“ With baneful seed will grow the land untilld,
“ The more good strength within the ground may be.

CANTO XXX

223

- " A little while my face his need fulfilled; 121
" While yet my tender eyes he saw, I could
" Lead him with me by the fair way I willed.
- " But me he left and other loves pursued, 124
" So soon as I was to the threshold close
" Of this my second age, and life renewed;
- " When from the flesh to spirit I uprose, 127
" Less dear and pleasing then I did abide,
" Though beauty here with worth increasing grows.
- " His steps in ways untrue he turned aside, 130
" Eager false images of good to hail,
" That pay no promise wholly, when they're tried.
- " Little the inspiration could avail, 133
" Which then I gained in dreams and otherwise,
" To call him back, so was affection frail.
- " He sank so low, all Heaven might devise 136
" For his salvation fell too short, unless
" To bring the races damned before his eyes.
- " Wherefore within the gates of bitterness, 139
" To him who hath the journey hither wrought,
" Were borne the weeping prayers of my distress.
- " God's high decree would here be set at nought, 142
" Were Lethe passed and all provision dear
" Were tasted now, and yet no scot were sought
- " Of penitence, that sheds at least a tear." 145

CANTO XXXI

TURNING direct to Dante, Beatrice receives his broken confession of how he fell away so soon as her countenance was hidden from him. Whereon she shows him how that very loss of her bodily presence, which he urges as the cause of his defection, should have taught him the emptiness of all earthly and mortal beauty, weaned his heart from earth and given it to her in heaven. Like a chidden child, dumb with shame, confessing and repenting, Dante stands; but Beatrice will not suffer him to take refuge in childish pleas or excuses, and in the very terms whereby she summons him to look on her, reminds him that he has reached man's estate, and should long have put away childish things. Whereon, in yet deeper shame, he wrenches up his downcast face to look on her, and sees her surpassing her former self more now than erst she surpassed all others. The passion of his penitence and his hatred of all those things which had enticed him away from her so vanquish him that he falls senseless to the ground. Dante comes to himself neck-deep in the stream, into which he plunges his head, of which he drinks, and which he crosses, by Matilda's ministration. After which he is drawn into the dance of the four star-nymphs who promise to lead him to the light of Beatrice's eyes; into which their three sisters, Faith, Hope, and Charity, will strengthen him to gaze. They keep their word; but Dante's passionate reminiscences and longings are awed by the august impersonation of Revelation, whom he has found where he looked only for the Florentine maiden he had lost on earth. The divine and human nature of Christ are flashed alternately from the reflection in her eyes though ever combined in the mysterious being himself, while the three nymphs implore Beatrice to turn their light upon her

faithful pilgrim and unveil to him the beauty of her smile.
Never was poet who could utter in words the splendour that
now bursts upon him.

"Thou, on the far side of the sacred stream,"
Her speech's point directing at me straight,
(The speech whose edge full sharp enow did seem,)

She spake again, nor stayed at all to wait, 4
"Speak, say if this be true; with charge so brought,
" 'Tis meet that thy confession here should mate."

So great confusion in my soul was wrought, 7
That my voice moved, and yet was spent before
Its way from out my throat it then had fought.

"What thinkest thou?" a short space she forbore, 10
Then spake, "Reply to me, the stream not yet
"Hath washed from thee thy memory's sad store."

Fear and confusion both together met, 13
Thrust such a "yes" from out my lips, that sight
Must aid, due understanding to beget.

As breaks the cross-bow, cord and bow outright, 16
If strained too far, and so the arrow's stroke
With far less force upon the mark will light;

So, 'neath the heavy burden there, I broke, 19
And in its passage my voice died away,
'Mid streams of sighs and tears that there awoke.

- “ In thy desire of me,” I heard her say, 22
“ Which led thee on, so to adore the good,
“ Which past all aspiration still doth stay,
“ What chains were there, what gulfs before thee
stood, 25
“ What didst thou find that had such power o’er thee,
“ From hope of pressing on to change thy mood?
“ And what enticement or what gain didst see 28
“ In any others, of a worth so high,
“ That thou through them must needs a wanderer be?”
After the heaving of a bitter sigh, 31
I scarcely found the voice to answer low,
And my lips formed the words right painfully;
Weeping I said, “ The ever present show 34
“ Of things, with its false pleasure, so misled,
“ When once thy face I could no longer know.”
“ Nor silence, nor denial, would hide,” she said, 37
“ What thou confessedst, known were’t none the less,
“ To such a judge, thy fault is manifested.
“ But free avowal of unworthiness, 40
“ Bursting from thine own lips, within our court,
“ Turns back the wheel, against the edge to press.
“ Natheless, so that one shame thou mayst support
“ For this thy sin, and siren’s voices hear 44
“ Another time, with strength of stouter sort,

- " Hear and put by the seed whence springs the tear;
" So shalt thou learn to what far other place, 47
" My body dead would fain have drawn thee near.
- " Nature and Art ne'er brought before thy face 49
" Pleasure so great, as those fair limbs that now
" Scattered to dust, once did my soul embrace.
- " And if my death to thee must disallow 52
" The highest joy, what mortal thing had right
" To wake desire in thee 'fore it to bow?
- " Truly shouldst thou, at the first arrow's flight 55
" Of things deceitful, have arisen to me,
" Who was no more to such vain seemings plight.
- " No damsel fair, nor other vanity 58
" Of such brief joy, should have thy wings weighed
down,
" To wait more darts than those assailing thee;
- " For two or three will wait the bird new-flown, 61
" But 'fore the eyes of the full-fledged in vain
" Is arrow shot, or nets abroad are thrown."
- As children dumb and shamefaced will remain, 64
And, eyes upon the ground, will stand to hear,
Self-recognising, of repentance fain;
- So then stood I. Then she; " Since through thine ear,
" Grief comes so to thee, lift thy beard and stand, 68
" And look, and greater grief thy heart will sear."

With less resistance is the oak-tree grand, 70
Uprooted by a gale our realm has sent,
Or one that bloweth from Iarbas' land,

Than there I raised my chin obedient; 73
When by the beard she named my face, I knew
Full well the venom of the argument.

When I stretched forth my face, then, to my view 76
Appeared those marvels of Creation's prime,
Resting; no more sweet flowers did they strew;

And mine eyes, hardly steadfast for the time, 79
Saw Beatrice looking now towards the beast,
Whose natures two, one being make sublime.

Veiled and beyond the stream, to me at least, 82
She seemed her ancient self to vanquish more,
Than she surpassed the rest, ere Death released;

The nettle of repentance pierced me sore, 85
Till of all earthly things I most did hate
What once had power to make me most adore.

Such great remorse gnawed at my heart, prostrate, 88
Vanquished, I fell; and what thereafter passed,
She knoweth, she who wrought me to that state.

And when my heart new knowledge gained at last 91
Of outward things, she cried above my head,
Whom I had found alone, " Hold, hold me fast! "

Into the river, throat deep she had led, 94
And drawing me behind her, swift and light
As any shuttle, o'er the flood she sped.

When now the happy bank was near to sight, 97
"Asperges me," sounded with sweeter care
Than now I can remember, much less write.

Opened her arms straightway the lady fair, 100
Embraced my head and dipped me down anew,
So that perforce some drops I swallowed there.

Then bathed and clean, from out the stream she drew
And set me, where the bright four dancing move, 104
And each thereon an arm about me threw.

"Nymphs are we here, stars in the heaven above; 106
"Ere Beatrice had known the world's despite,
"Her handmaids we, ordained to serve and love.

"We to her eyes will lead thee, but for light 109
"So glad that is within, the other three
"Who see more deep, shall keener make thy sight."

Thus singing they began; then went with me 112
Amidst them, up unto the grifon's breast,
Where Beatrice stood and turned her face to see.

They said, "Spare not thy sight, nor give it rest; 115
"Before thee, lo, those emeralds renowned,
"Whence love drew arms whereby thou wert distressed."

Hotter than flame, a thousand longings bound 118
Mine eyes so fast upon the shining eyes,
That on the grifon gazing still were found.

As in a glass the sun, not otherwise, 121
The twofold beast in them reflected shone,
Now in the one now in the other guise.

Think, reader, greater marvel were there none, 124
Than thus the thing itself at rest to view,
While in the image change went on and on.

Then as in me joy and amazement grew, 127
And my soul tasted of that wondrous fare,
That satisfying, makes us thirst anew;

The other three came forward, dancing there 130
To their angelic chant, and I discerned
In all their ways, they were a race more rare;

" Turn Beatrice, let thy holy eyes be turned 133
" Upon thy faithful one," ran their appeal,
" Whose sight of thee such weary toil hath earned,

" For grace, do us the grace that thou reveal 136
" To him thy mouth, that he thereby may know,
" The second beauty that thou dost conceal."

Splendour of living light, before thy glow, 139
Who that beneath Parnassus shade grows pale,
Or drinks the stream that from its breast doth flow,

CANTO XXXI

231

Would not appear within his mind to quail, 142
Trying to render thee in all thy worth,
When in the free air thou didst thus unveil,

While heaven in harmony shadowed thee forth. 145

CANTO XXXII

THE eager gaze with which Dante quenches his ten years' thirst is for a moment blinded by the glory on which he looks. When he recovers his full powers of vision he perceives the procession deploying north, toward the noon-day sun; and he and Statius take their places by the right wheel of the chariot; and pass on, to the accompaniment of angelic song, through the forest, till Beatrice descends. They approach the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which represents the principle of obedience, and therefore of the Empire, whereas the car from which Beatrice has descended represents the Church; the ideal relations between which two powers are represented by the reverence of the grifon for the tree, the binding of the pole of the chariot to it, and the spring beauty that at once falls on it. Here slumber falls upon the poet, from which he wakes bewildered, like the apostles after the transfiguration, to find Beatrice bereft of all her glorious escort save the seven nymphs, bearing in their hands the seven tapers. Here, in this deserted Earthly Paradise, which would be thronged with inhabitants had Church and State been true to their mission, Dante beholds an allegorical portrayal of the perverse relations between the two, and of the disasters and corruptions of the Church, of her persecutions, of the heresies that threatened her, of the yet more fatal favour of Christian emperors, of the great schism of Islam, of the foul corruption of the Court of Rome, and the Babylonian captivity of Avignon.

So fixed was all my gaze, mine eyes intent
To quench the thirst which ten long years had known,
That other senses were consumed and spent;

And either side of them high walls were thrown 4
Of unconcern, since that blest smile so fair
Drawing with nets of old, made me its own.

When that perforce mine eyes directed were 7
To my left hand, since from those goddesses,
" Too eager art thou " came a murmur there;

Lo! then that state of sight, which ever is 10
In eyes but newly smitten by the sun,
Made me some while lost in obscurities.

But sight, when 'twas for lesser things re-won, 13
(The lesser as regards that greater grace,
Mine eyesight was perforce compelled to shun,)

Showed me the glorious army of the place, 16
(That now upon its right-ward flank had wheeled,)
Returned, the sun and the seven flames to face.

As in retreat, a troop turns under shield, 19
And with the standard wheeleth, ere the whole
Can change its front completely in the field;

That soldiery, which heaven did enroll 22
For vanward, passed us all in order by,
Ere yet the car had turned about its pole.

Then to the wheels returned the ladies nigh, 25
And last the grifon moved its hallowed load,
So that no plume did shake. The fair lady,

Who drew me o'er the ford and marked my road, 28
And Statius and I, followed that wheel
That in its orbit smaller curving showed.

Depth of high forest did our course reveal, 31
Empty, through her whose faith the serpent bent,
And to our steps sounded an angel peal.

Such space as in three arrow flights were spent, 34
Unto our course my memory doth allow,
When Beatrice stayed the car and from it went.

"Adam," I heard them sadly murmur now; 37
Then they encircled a great tree all bare
Of flowers, and other leaves in every bough.

Its crown of foliage, which spreads more fair 40
The loftier it is, would certainly
Make Indians in their woods due reverence bear.

"Blessed art thou, grifon, since that from this tree, 43
"Though sweet to taste, thy beak tears nought away,
"To make the belly writhe in misery."

So round about the sturdy tree cried they 46
Aloud: and the two-natured beast thereon
"Thus is the righteous seed preserved for aye."

Then turning to the chariot pole anon, 49
He dragged it to the tree widowed of green,
And left it bound, there whence 'twas once withdrawn.

As trees of ours with swelling buds are seen, 52
Beneath the great light's rays when they combine
With those behind the carp's celestial sheen;

Then each renews its colour sweet and fine, 55
Before the sun upon his journey goes,
And yokes his steeds 'neath other starry sign;

So with a colour that was less of rose, 58
And more of violet, I saw renewed
The tree, that erst with naked boughs uprose.

The song that people sang I understood 61
Nowise, nor do I seek to tell it here;
In vain its notes my mortal hearing wooed.

If I could represent how sleep drew near, 64
Through tale of Syrinx to eyes pitiless,
Those eyes whose power of vigil cost them dear,

Like painter who a model doth possess, 67
Would I depict how fast asleep I fell,
And challenge all who paint well drowsiness.

Wherefore of how I waked I pass to tell, 70
And say, a splendour rent the veil o'er me
Of sleep, and " Rise, what dost thou? " heard I well.

As to behold some flow'rs of the apple tree, 73
Whose fruit the angels even sorely need,
Which makes in heaven eternal feast to be,

Peter and James and John were led indeed, 76
And overwhelmed, awaked at that command,
By which from deeper slumber they were freed,

And saw how there diminished was their band, 79
Since Moses and Elias both were gone,
And how their Lord with raiment chang'd did stand;

So then waked I, and saw that pitying one 82
Bend over me who was my guide, and led
My steps, the first, along the stream alone.

And, "Where is Beatrice?" in doubt I said; 85
"Beneath the foliage new, as thou mayst see,
"She sits upon its root," she answerèd;

"See her encircled by a company; 88
"Following the grifon, mount on high the rest,
"With sweeter song of more profundity."

If further thought were in her speech expressed, 91
I know not: 'twas enough that I was found
With her, who turned me back from other quest.

She sat alone upon the naked ground, 94
As though the chariot's guardian she were,
Whicherst the two-formed beast had straightly bound,

And circle-wise they made a barrier 97
The seven nymphs, who bare those lamps in hand,
That neither North nor South wind need to fear.

“ Here for a space thou’lt join the forest band; 100

“ Then of that Rome with me be citizen

“ For aye, where Christ doth as a Roman stand;

“ Wherefore fix on the car thine eyes, and then, 103

“ Returning to the world that liveth ill,

“ Write what thou’lt see, to serve thy fellow men! ”

Thus Beatrice; and I devoted still 106

All at the feet of her behest to be,

My mind and eyes gave there where she did will.

Never did fire come down so suddenly, 109

From densest cloud, when from the very end,

The confine most remote, it falleth free,

As swooping did the bird of Jove descend 112

Down through the tree; and bark and flowers bright

And the new foliage it sought to rend,

And smote the car, which reeled beneath his might,

E’en as a vessel in a storm will sweep, 116

Starboard or larboard as the waves may fight.

And then behold I saw a she-fox leap 118

The body of the triumph’s car within,

That seemed a fast from all good food to keep;

But with rebuke upon her for foul sin, 121

My lady put her soon to flight, that bore

Such speed as fleshless bones like hers could win.

Then, whence he first had come, I saw once more 124
The eagle swoop adown into the car,
And leave it with his plumage feathered o'er.

And as from out a sorrowing heart, afar 127
From Heaven, came a voice that seemed to say,
“ How evil, little ship, thy burdens are! ”

And then meseemed that the earth open lay 130
'Twixt the two wheels, a dragon forth to bring,
That thrust his tail up through the car away;

And as the wasp that draweth back her sting, 133
So pulling with his spiteful tail, he drew
The floor from thence, and so went wandering.

That which remained covered with feathers grew, 136
(Offered perchance with meaning kind and fair),
Even as grass on fertile land anew;

And both the wheels again were covered there, 139
Also the pole, in shorter time to see
Than for a sigh the mouth stays open e'er.

The sacred frame transformed thus utterly, 142
Above its parts put heads forth to my sight,
Each corner one, and o'er the pole were three;

The last were horned and showed as oxen might; 145
But single horns the others' foreheads crowned;
Such monsters never surely saw the light.

Secure, as fortress on a mountain found, 148
A shameless harlot I thereon descried,
Seated on high, with eyes quick glancing round.

A giant saw I standing by her side, 151
As though she should not from his power be ta'en,
And oft each kissed the other in their pride.

But when her lustful vagrant eye was fain 154
To turn on me, that lover fiercer grown,
From head to feet, harsh blows on her did rain;

Then jealous, and in anger cruel shown, 157
He loosed the beast, and dragged it through the wood,
Until the harlot was by trees alone,

With the strange monster screened from where I stood.

CANTO XXXIII

THE seven virtues in alternate strains now proclaim, with tears, that the forces of the world have found their hour; and Beatrice declares that though her glory will for a time be withdrawn from them, it is but for a season. Then she signs to Matilda, to Dante and to Statius to follow her; but after only a few steps, graciously summons Dante to her side, bids him drop all diffidence, interprets the things he has just seen, and hints at the political Messiah who shall restore the due relations of Church and State and purify them both. But her comment is far darker than the text. So at least she knows it will seem to Dante's dull and over-crusted mind; wherefore the stamp has been impressed upon his eye rather than on his unreceptive intellect. Dante gently expostulates with her for uttering herself only in inextricable enigmas. She answers that she does so to show him how inadequate has been the training of the teaching he has lately followed; but he, who, since he drank of Lethe, has forgotten all the interval between his loss of Beatrice upon earth and his finding of her again in Eden, answers that he cannot mind him of ever having wandered from her or being in need of any other school than that of her wisdom; upon which she reminds him that this forgetfulness of ever having left her is a sign that it was tainted with evil; for only the memory of what is so tainted is washed away by Lethe. Finally she promises that henceforth she will vex him no more by veiled discourse, but will speak with the naked simplicity that his untrained powers demand. The sun is now in high heaven, and they reach a fountain whence two streams flow, and seem loth to part from each other. Dante has forgotten all that Matilda told him about them, not so much that Lethe has

washed away the thought, for surely it was untainted by any evil, as that before Eunoë is tasted and secures every good impression from being obliterated, such all-absorbing experiences as have but now been Dante's, may obliterate from the memory even the most beautiful thoughts that have preceded them. Henceforth, however, all fair memories of good, whatsoever their relative significance, shall be secured against oblivion and shall take their perfect place in the perfect whole; for Dante, followed by Statius, drinks of the stream of Eunoë; and thence with life fresh as the leaves of spring he issues, inly equipped and cleansed for his further journey to the stars.

"Deus, venerunt gentes," alternate
And weeping, now the three and now the four,
Those ladies 'gan a psalm of sweetness great;

Beatrice, compassionate and sighing sore, 4
Changed as she hearkened then, in such a way
That Mary at the cross changed little more.

But when the other virgins seemed to pray 7
To her to speak, upright she stood and free
And glowing like to fire, began to say;

"Modicum, et non videbitis me, 10
"Et iterum, beloved sisters mine,
"Modicum, et vos videbitis me."

Then set the seven before her in their line, 13
While to the lady and the sage who stayed,
And me, to follow her, she made a sign.

Thus went she on, nor was her tenth step made 16
Upon the ground, as I believe, ere clear
Her eyes upon mine eyes she smote, and said

To me, with tranquil aspect; "Come more near, 19
"So that as much as unto speech I'm wrought,
"Thou be well placed with greater heed to hear."

So soon as I was where my duty brought, 22
"Brother," she said, "Why art thou not intent
"To question? why being with me sayst thou nought?"

Like unto those who are too reverent 25
In speech before their rulers, so 'tis found
Their voice not living to their lips is sent,

So came it then to me; without full sound 28
I then began; "My lady, of my need
"And of its good, thy knowledge doth abound."

And she to me, "From fear and shame indeed, 31
"I would thou now wert loosed, so from their cloak,
"The semblance of a dream, thy words be freed.

"Know that the vessel that the serpent broke 34
"Was, and is not; but let the guilty know
"God's vengeance fears no sop, nor heeds its yoke.

"Not for all time without an heir shall go 37
"The eagle, who his plumes left on the car,
"Which first to monster, then to prey did grow.

CANTO XXXIII

243

- " Truly I see and tell, there comes the star, 40
- " Secure from hindrance and impediment,
- " To bring us times that are not very far,

- " When a five hundred, ten, and five, all sent 43
- " By God, the thief and giant both shall slay,
- " Together in sin and joined in punishment.

- " Perchance my prophecy, obscure as they 46
- " Of Sphinx or Themis, less persuadeth thee,
- " Since like to them, it clouds thy mind's bright day;

- " But soon the facts as Naiades thou'lt see, 49
- " By whom this riddle shall be solved and done,
- " And yet no loss of flocks or corn shall be.

- " Take heed then as my words are said; each one 52
- " Do thou to those who live on earth proclaim,
- " Whose life a race is, that is deathward run.

- " And take good heed, when that thou writest them, 55
- " Thy vision of this tree thou must not hide,
- " How twice despoiled it was, twice brought to shame.

- " Whoso doth rob it, or doth tear its side, 58
- " Doth blasphemy of deed 'gainst God begin,
- " Who made it for His service sanctified.

- " Through biting there the primal soul must win 61
- " Through years five thousand, lost in need and pain,
- " For Him who punished in Himself that sin.

- " Thy wit is sleeping if thou see not plain, 64
" That special cause hath raised the tree so high,
" And made its summit thus transposed remain.
- " Did not vain thoughts, as Elsan waters, ply 67
" The mind of thee, were not their pleasantness
" A Pyramus unto thy mulberry,
- " Then, only by these circumstances stress, 70
" God's justice in the interdict were known
" Morally to thee in the tree, no less.
- " But since thy intellect is turned to stone, 73
" I see, and stonelike is of hue so wrought,
" Thou'rt dazzled by the light my words have thrown,
- " Be here at least by thee the outline caught, 76
" Though yet unwritten, as the pilgrim still
" Bears back his staff wreathed with the palm he
sought."
- And I; " Even as wax beneath the seal, 79
" That changes not the form that's printed, so
" Behold my brain is printed by your will.
- " But why so far beyond my range must go 82
" Your longed-for word? the more I strain my sight
" To follow it, the greater loss I know."
- " That thou may'st see," she said, " that school aright
" Thou'st followed, and how far its teachings be 86
" From following my word's far reaching flight;

“ And that thy way as distant thou may’st see 88
“ From God’s, as from the earth thou mayest find,
“ That heaven that wheels above most speedily.”

And I replied; “ I cannot call to mind, 91
“ Nor doth my conscience gnaw me any way,
“ That e’er myself from you I did unbind.”

“ And if thereof thy memory doth not stay,” 94
Smiling she answered, “ Yet remember here
“ That Lethe’s water thou hast drunk to-day.

“ And if smoke argues fire, then it is clear 97
“ That fault is proved by this forgetfulness
“ In thy desire, intent on things elsewhere.

“ But now my words shall naked be, no less 100
“ Than shall be needed to make plain each one,
“ To thy rude vision in its feebleness.”

With slower steps and glowing more, the sun 103
Held the meridian circle which doth change
With new positions, hither now, now yon;

When, as he halts, who doth as escort range 106
Before a company, if as he wend
He findeth aught or trace of aught that’s strange,

Halted the seven ladies at the end 109
Of a pale shadow, such as from leaves of green
And darkening boughs, o’er Alpine streams descend.

Euphrates sure it seemed it might have been, 112
And Tigris, welling up in one fair space,
Like friends that loth to separate, are seen.

"O light, O glory, of the human race, 115
"What flood is this, that from one source doth pour,
"And self from self doth wend before my face?"

At this my prayer, "Matilda beg, therefore, 118
"To tell thee," was it said; then answered she,
That lady fair, as one who seeketh more

To free himself from blame, "Both this, by me 121
"Was told to him and other things; and sure
"Unhid by Lethe's waters must they be."

"Perchance a trouble greater to endure" 124
(Thus Beatrice) "which memory doth impede,
"Hath left the sight of his mind's eyes obscure,

"But lo, Eunöe flowing; do thou lead 127
"Him thither, and for fainting virtue's sake,
"Re-quicken him as thou art wont at need."

As gentle souls, who no delaying make, 130
But freely do another's will fulfil,
Soon as by outward sign its form it take,

So, when I was obedient to her will, 133
The lady fair set forth; and Statius bade
With gracious dignity; "Come with him still."

CANTO XXXIII

247

Ah! reader, if a greater space I had
Wherein to write, I'd sing at least in part,
That draught for all satiety too glad. 136

But since all pages promised in my heart,
For this my second canticle are done, 139
No further may I strain the curb of art;

From that most holy wave I came anon 142
Re-made, as when at end of winter's wars,
With newborn leaves the new trees greet the sun,

Pure and made ready now to reach the stars. 145

NOTES

DANTE'S PURGATORY

§ 1. THE CENTRAL IDEA OF THE PURGATORY

THE key to the comprehension of Dante's representation of Purgatory is to be found in the connection of the mountain with the Earthly Paradise, or Garden of Eden, situated at its summit. We learn from careful reading of the last lines of the *Inferno* that the mountain of Purgatory was thrown up (like a mole-hill, if one may use such an illustration) when Satan was hurled down from heaven to the centre of the earth. His upper bulk was thrust into Hell, which was already there to receive him; and beneath the Mount of Purgatory the earth closed up behind him, leaving a huge cavern, into which his nether limbs stretched up.

So the fall of Satan was the occasion for a portion of the substance of the earth to leap up heavenward above all the elemental perturbations of the lower atmosphere, thus making itself worthy to become the seat of that human race which was to replace the fallen angels.

Now the life of Eden, had man persevered, was to have been an earthly life, including what may be thought of as natural religion,—a consciousness of the love and nearness of God, a perfect spontaneity of human joy and goodness, and a knowledge of all earthly wisdom. But the higher revelations which would complete the life of man, not as an earthly but as a heavenly being, were to have been subsequently added. Therefore, when man fell he forfeited immediately the perfect earthly life, and ultimately the perfect heavenly life. His first task, then, must be to recover the life of the Earthly Paradise; and as purgation, or recovery from the fall, consists primarily in regaining Eden, the mountain pedestal of the Garden of Eden becomes by a necessity of symbolic logic the scene of purgation. Physically and spiritually man must climb back to the "uplifted garden." Hence the key-note of the Purgatory is primarily ethical, and only by implication spiritual. Cato, the type of the moral virtues, is the guardian of the place; Virgil, the type of human philosophy, is the guide; and the Earthly Paradise, the type of the "blessedness of this life" (*De Mon.* iii. 16: 43-52), is the immediate goal. Beatrice is only realised by Dante as he had known her in the Eden-like "new life" of his youth, and by no means as the august impersonation of revealed truth. She appears to him in due course, surrounded by her escort, when he has reached the state of earthly perfection; and the vacancy of that region of earthly bliss is explained to him by the Vision of false and confused government, wherein is portrayed the failure of Church and State to bring man back to the life of Eden. To the Church as an earthly organisation, or regimen, the grace of God has committed by anticipation such revealed truth as is necessary to help the enfeebled will of man to recover the state of Eden. But the Church, as a regimen, is not to be confounded with Revelation (Beatrice) herself. The proper office of the Church, as a regimen, ends when the proper office of Beatrice begins. See *De Monarchia*, iii. 4: 107-111.

§ 2. THE DIVISIONS OF THE PURGATORY

The details of the second cantica follow the general scheme; based on three, sub-divided into seven, raised by unlike additions to nine, and by a final member on a totally different plane, to ten.

The threefold division, which is expounded at length in Canto xvii., rests on the distinction between (i) perverse, (ii) defective, and (iii) excessive love. By perverse love is meant a delight in things which ought to grieve us, and of the three natural objects of love, God, self, and neighbour, the two first are secured (except in case of such monstrous perversion as is punished in Circle 7 of Hell) from hate. (I) Perverse love, then, must consist in taking a delight in evil that befalls others. The proud man desires to excel, and therefore rejoices in defeating the attempts of others (i). The envious man hates being over-shadowed and made to think meanly of himself and his belongings, and therefore rejoices in the misfortunes of others (ii). The angry man wishes in his indignation to make those who have offended him smart, and so finds a satisfaction in their sufferings (iii). (II) They who are spiritually and intellectually sluggish in the contemplation of the divine goodness, or sluggish in the will to pursue it, are alike guilty of sloth, or inadequate love (iv). (III) And those who pursue wealth (v), or the pleasures of the table (vi), or carnal appetite (vii), without observing due limitations, are guilty of excessive and ill-regulated love for things which should only take a secondary place in their affections. Hence the threefold division, by sub-division of its extreme members, has given us a sevenfold division which coincides with the seven deadly sins of the Catholic Church. Besides this we have on the island at the base of the mountain those who have died in contumacy against the Church; and on the slopes of the mount below the gate we have the late-repentant. These two classes raise seven to nine; and at the top of the mountain we have the Earthly Paradise, not part of Purgatory at all, but the goal to which the purified souls are led.

10	The Garden of Eden	The Earthly Paradise	
9	Love {	{ Carnality vii. Gluttony vi. Avarice v. Sloth iv. Anger iii. Envy ii. Pride i.	The seven circles of pur- gation of the seven deadly sins
8			
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
	The Late-repentant The Excommunicate	} Antepurgatory	

P. H. W.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE "PURGATORIO"

It is near sunrise when the poets issue at the eastern base of the Mount of Purgatory (i. 19-21), and close upon sunrise, 6 A.M., as they leave Cato (i. 107-117). The stars in mid-heaven have disappeared when the souls are discharged from the angel's boat (ii. 55-57), though shadows are not yet distinctly visible since the souls recognise Dante as a living man only by his breathing (ii. 67, 68). The sun is up and the hour of Vespers, 3 P.M., has already arrived in Italy, as the poets turn westward again towards the mountain (iii. 16-26). The conversation with Manfred is over about 9.20 A.M. (iv. 15). It is noonday when Dante has finished his conversation with Belacqua (iv. 137-139); that is to say, the sun is in the north; and since the poets are almost on the due east portion of the mountain, it is not long ere the sun disappears behind the hill (vi. 51). So Dante casts no shadow, and is not recognised as a living man by Sordello, with whom Virgil converses till day is declining (vii. 43). At sunset the souls in the valley of the kings sing their evening hymn (viii. 1-18); very soon after which the poets ascend (descent being possible after sunset, though they could not

have ascended, *cf.* vii. 58, 59) into the valley, as twilight deepens (viii. 43-51). Taking the moment of full moon to have been at sunrise on the Friday morning, it is now 3×24 hours since full moon, and the retardation of the moon is therefore 3×52 minutes = 2 hours 36 minutes; and the moon, therefore, has passed through the Scales and is 36 minutes deep in Scorpion. The first stars of Scorpion, then, and the glow of the lunar aurora are on the horizon, and it is just over 8.30 P.M. on what (with the reservations indicated in the chronological note on the *Inferno*) we may call Monday evening, when Dante falls asleep (ix. 1-12). Before dawn on the next morning Dante has a vision of the eagle, and is in point of fact carried up by Lucia near to the gate of Purgatory (ix. 13-63), where he awakes at about 8 A.M. (ix. 44). The retardation of the moon is now 3 hours and 2 minutes, and when they issue upon the first terrace she has already set (x. 13-16). It is therefore about 9 A.M. About 12 o'clock noon they reach the stair to the second circle (xii. 80, 81). When the poets pass from the second to the third terrace they are walking westward and have therefore reached the northern quarter of the mount, and it is 3 o'clock in the afternoon (xv. 1-9); and their direction has not sensibly changed when they meet the wrathful (xv. 139). The sun has already set at the base of the mountain (xvii. 12) when the final visions of the circle of the wrathful come upon Dante, and he sets to the poets, high up on the mountain, just as they have completed the ascent of the stair to the fourth circle (xvii. 70-75). By comparing these data, it will be seen that the poets traverse portions of the first three circles, constituting altogether a quadrant or a little more, during this day. They start on the eastern side of the mountain, and end at the north, or a little west of it, and have spent about three hours in each circle. About three hours more are occupied by Virgil's discourse, which ends towards midnight, when the moon, which rose at 9.28, a good way south of east, now first appears due east, or a trifle north of due east, from behind the mountain (xviii. 76-81). Before dawn (xix. 1-6) on what we may call Wednesday, Dante has his vision of the Siren, and it is full daylight when he wakes. They still travel due, or nearly due, west, with the newly risen sun at their backs (xix. 37-39). They swiftly pass the fourth circle and reach the fifth, in which they stay so long that it is after ten when they reach the sixth circle (xxii. 115-120). Though they are now well to the west of the mountain, the sun has travelled with them, so that Dante casts a shadow (xxiii. 114). Indeed it is after two o'clock when they reach the stair which leads to the seventh circle (xxv. 1-3), so that by this time shadows are visible on the mountain from near the north-east to near the south-west of its surface. As Dante converses with the shades on the seventh terrace the sun is almost due west; the poet is walking nearly due south, the sun on his right and the flame growing redder under his shadow at the left (xxvi. 1-9). And the position is not perceptibly changed when the angel of the circle appears to them as the sun sets at the base of the mountain (xxvii. 1-6); nor have they mounted many stairs after passing through the flame, before the sun, exactly behind them, sets on the higher regions of the mount where they now are (xxvii. 61-69). Before sunrise (xxvii. 94-96) on the day we may call Thursday, Dante sees Leah in his vision, and wakes at dawn of day (xxvii. 109-114). The sun shines full upon their faces as they enter the Earthly Paradise from the western point, facing east (xxvii. 133); and it is noonday (xxxiii. 103-105) as they reach the source of Lethe and Eunoe.

For the time references in the *Paradiso*, see *Parad.* xxvii. 83, 84, *Argument*, and note.

P. H. W.

CANTO I

9-12. Calliope—the Muse of Epic Poetry.—The Pierides, the nine daughters of Pierus, King of Emathia, having challenged the Muses to a contest of song and suffered defeat, were changed by them into magpies (see Ovid's *Metam.* v. 293 *sqq.*).

19-21. Venus was not actually in Pisces in the spring of 1300, but Dante is probably following a tradition as to the position of all the planets at the moment of Creation (*cf. Inf.* i. 37-40). In the representation of the Creation in the Collegiate Church at San Gimignano, Venus is depicted as being in Pisces.

23-27. We must assume either that Dante invented these four stars, which he identifies with the four cardinal virtues—Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance (*cf. Purg.* xxix. 130-132; xxxi. 103-106); or that he had learnt the existence of the Southern Cross from some traveller.

30. Only a portion of the Wain would at any time be visible in the supposed latitude of Purgatory, and it was now completely below the horizon.

31 *sqq.* Cato of Utica (born B.C. 95), one of the chief opponents of Caesar's measures. After the battle of Thapsus, he committed suicide rather than fall into his enemy's hands (B.C. 46). This was regarded as the supreme act of devotion to liberty (*Conv.* iii. 5: 90; *De Mon.* ii. 5: 98), and partly accounts for his position here (see *vv.* 71, 72); though Virgil's line—*secretosque pios, his dantem jura Catonem* (*Aen.* viii. 670), which refers to the good set apart from the wicked in the world beyond, probably weighed more heavily with Dante. Our poet's general conception of Cato is derived from Lucan (*Pharsalia*, ii. 373-391); and his intense admiration of the man and of his character finds expression in several passages of the *Convito* (iv. 5: 103; 6: 71; 27: 23; 28: 92). Cato's position as warder of the Christian Purgatory is probably to be explained in a similar way as the position of Ripheus in Paradise (see *Par.* xx. 118 *sqq.*, and *note*); note especially the allegorical significance of the stars in *vv.* 37-39, and the fact that *Sole* (Sun) is often synonymous with God.

40. See *Inf.* xxxiv. 130.

58-60. "Life's last day," here used in the double sense of bodily and spiritual death (*cf. Conv.* iv. 7: 102 *sqq.*). The verses refer, of course, to the allegory of *Inf.* i.

77. For Minos, see *Inf.* v. 4 *sqq.*

78-80. Marcia (for whom see *Inf.* iv. 128) was the second wife of Cato, who yielded her to his friend Q. Hortensius. On the death of the latter, she was again married to Cato. The *Convito* (iv. 28: 97-139) contains an elaborate allegory, in which the return of Marcia to Cato signifies the return of the noble soul to God.

86. "Yonder." This word when used by itself in the *Purgatorio* always means "in the other hemisphere."

88. "The evil flood" is the Acheron (see *Inf.* iii. 70 *sqq.*).

CANTO II

1-9. It is sunset at Jerusalem; and midnight on the Ganges, *i.e.* in India [when the sun is in Aries, the night is in the opposite sign of Libra, or the Scales; and Libra falls from the hand of night at the time of the autumn equinox, when the sun enters the constellation, and the nights become longer than the days]: it is therefore sunrise in Purgatory.

46. According to Dante (*Ep. ad Can. Grand.* § 7) the anagogical meaning of this Psalm (cxiv.) is "the exit of the sanctified soul from the slavery of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory." *Cf. Conv.* ii. 1: 63-65, and see *Par.* xxv. 55-57, *note*.

55-57. See the chronological note. The light of the rising sun (which was in Aries) had blotted Capricorn out of mid-heaven (Capricorn touching the meridian at the moment when Aries touches the horizon).

76. Casella, a musician of Florence or of Pistoia, and a personal friend of Dante's, some of whose verses he is said to have set to music, including perhaps the canzone (see verse 112) which was subsequently annotated by the poet in the third book of his *Convito*.

98. Three months, *i.e.*, since the beginning of the Jubilee (*cf. Inf.* xviii. 28-33).

100-105. Salvation is to be attained only in the true Church, which has its seat at Rome: hence the souls of those that are not damned assemble at the mouth of the Tiber, the port of Rome.

CANTO III

25-27. When it is 3 P.M. in Italy, it is 6 P.M. at Jerusalem and 6 A.M. in Purgatory.

27. This tradition is recorded by Virgil's biographers, Donatus and Suetonius. The body was transferred by order of Augustus (*cf. Purg.* vii. 6).

37. Be satisfied *that it is*, without asking the reason *why*. "Demonstration is two-fold: the one demonstrates by means of the cause, and is called *propter quid* . . . the other by means of the effect, and is called the demonstration *quia*" (Thomas Aquinas).

38, 39. Had human reason been capable of penetrating these mysteries, there would have been no need for the revelation of the Word of God.

49. Lerici and Turbia are at the E. and W. extremities of Liguria, respectively.

88-90. The mountain was on their right, and the sun on their left.

103-145. This is Manfred (*ca.* 1231-1266), grandson of the Emperor Henry VI. and of his wife Constance (for whom see *Par.* iii. 109-120), and natural son of the Emperor Frederick II. Manfred's wife, Beatrice of Savoy, bore him a daughter who (in 1262) married Peter III. of Aragon (for whom and for whose sons see below, Canto vii. 112-123; *cf.* also *Par.* xix. 130-138). Manfred became King of Sicily in 1258, usurping the rights of his nephew Conradin. The Popes naturally opposed him, as a Ghibelline, and excommunicated him; and in 1265 Charles of Anjou came to Italy with a large army, on the invitation of Clement IV., and was crowned as counter King of Sicily. On February 26, 1266, Manfred was defeated by Charles at Benevento (some thirty miles N.E. of Naples), and slain. He was buried near the battlefield, beneath a huge cairn (each soldier of the army contributing a stone); but his body was disinterred by order of the Pope, and deposited on the banks of the Verde (now the Garigliano, *cf. Par.* viii. 63), outside the boundaries of the Kingdom of Naples and of the Church States, and with the rites usual at the burial of those who died excommunicate (*v.* 132).

CANTO IV

5, 6. "Plato asserted that there were divers souls with distinct organs in one and the same body" (Thomas Aquinas). On the Aristotelian doctrine of the three kinds of soul—vegetative, animal, and rational, see below, Canto xxv. *vv.* 52 *sqq.*

15. The sun traverses fifteen degrees every hour: it is therefore now 9.20 A.M.

25, 27. Sanleo: in the territory of Urbino; Noli: on the coast of Liguria, between Savona and Albenga; Bismantova: a hill in the Emilia, about twenty miles S. of Reggio.

41, 42. The angle of the quadrant (quarter of a circle) is 90°; that of a half quadrant is therefore 45°.

57. They were looking east, and therefore had the north to their left and the south to their right. South of the equator the equinoctial sun is north of the zenith at midday, for the same reason that north of the equator he is south of it.

61-66. See *Argument*. Castor and Pollux=the Twins (*cf. Par.* xxvii. 98 and *note*), which sign is further north of the equator than Aries. The sun is called "mirror" (like Saturn in *Par.* xxi. 18), because, in common with the other planets [for the sun= a planet, *cf. Inf.* i. 17, *note*], he receives the divine light from above, the spheres intervening, and reflects it downwards (*cf. Par.* xxviii. 127); and this is probably the attribute of the sun referred to in *v.* 63, though some commentators take the line to mean that he illuminates the northern and southern hemisphere alternately. The "glowing Zodiac"=that part of the Zodiac in which the sun is. The Bear indicates the North Pole.

68-72. Consider that Purgatory is at the exact antipodes of Jerusalem.—The "way"=the path of the sun, the ecliptic. For Phaëton, see *Inf.* xvii. 106-108, *note*.

82-84. The equator is equi-distant from Jerusalem and from the Mount of Purgatory.

98. The Florentine Belacqua, a friend of Dante's, was a maker of musical instruments, notorious for his sloth.

123. Seeing that thou art on the road to salvation.

137-139. It is noon in Purgatory, sunrise on the Ganges (the "shore"), and sunset in Morocco=Spain.

CANTO V

24. The *Miserere*—Psalm li.

37-39. Medieval science held falling stars and weather lightning to be due to "flaming vapours."

64-84. Jacopo del Cassero (probably related to the Guido of *Inf.* xxviii. 77), a Guelph of Fano (situated in the mark of Ancona, between Romagna and the kingdom of Naples, which was ruled by Charles II. of Anjou) was Podestà of Bologna in 1296. Having incurred the wrath of Azzo VIII. of Este (for whom see *Inf.* xii. 110-112; *cf. also Purg.* xx. 80), whose designs on the city he had frustrated, he hoped to escape his vengeance by exchanging the office at Bologna for a similar one at Milan (1298). He was, however, murdered by Azzo's orders [among the assassins being Ricardo da Cammino, for whom see *Par.* ix. 49-51] while on his way thither, at Oriaco, between Venice and Padua [the Paduans are called Antenori in *v.* 75, from their reputed founder Antenor, for whom see *Inf.* xxxii. 88, *note*; his escape to Italy after the fall of Troy, and his building of Padua are recorded by Virgil, *Aen.* i. 242 *sqq.*]. Oriaco is situated in a marshy country, while La Mira would have been easier of access to Jacopo in his flight (*vv.* 79-81).

85-129. Buonconte of Montefeltro, son of the Guido whose death forms the subject of a very similar episode in *Inf.* xxvii., and, like his father, a Ghibelline leader. He was in command of the Aretines when they were defeated by the Florentine Guelphs at Campaldino, on June 11, 1289, and was himself among the slain. [According to Bruni's testimony, Dante took part in this battle on the Guelph side; see *Inf.* xxi. 94-96, *note*]. Giovanna (*v.* 89) was Buonconte's wife. Campaldino is in the Upper Val d'Arno, or district of Casentino (bounded by the mountains of Pratomagno on the west and by the principal chain of the Apennines on the east—*v.* 116; *cf. Inf.* xxx. 65, and *Purg.* xiv. 43), between Poppi and Bibbiena. At the latter place the Archiano, which rises in the Apennines at the monastery of Camaldoli (*v.* 96; *cf. Par.* xxii. 49, *note*), falls into the Arno (*vv.* 97, 124-126).—With *vv.* 109-111, *cf. Purg.* xxviii. 121-124.

130-136. Until recently the story of *la Pia*, as given by the various commentators, was as follows:—The unfortunate lady belonged to the Sienese family of the Tolomei, and married Nello d'Inghiramo dei Pannocchieschi (Podestà of Volterra in 1277, and of Lucca in 1314; captain of the Tuscan Guefts in 1284; still living in 1322). She was put to death by her husband in 1295 at the Castello della Pietra, in the Sienese Maremma: some say that she was thrown out of a window, by Nello's orders, others that she died in some mysterious way (which probably gave rise to the tradition that the unhealthy marshes of the district were intended to, and actually did, kill her). Nello's motives are variously given: according to some accounts he was jealous (with or without cause); according to others he wished to get rid of his wife in order to be able to marry the Countess Margherita degli Aldobrandeschi, the widow of Guy of Montfort.—In the year 1886 this identification of *la Pia* was proved (by Banchi) to be impossible; and it is difficult to say how much truth there may be in the legends clustering round her name, till fresh documents concerning her are unearthed.

CANTO VI

1. "Dice"—*Zara*, a game of chance played with three dice.

13, 14. "The Aretine" is Benincasa da Laterina, who, as judge to the Podestà of Siena, condemned to death a relative of Ghin di Tacco, a notorious highwayman. The latter subsequently revenged himself by murdering Benincasa, while he was sitting as a magistrate at Rome.

15-17. This is Guccio of the Tarlati, which family was at the head of the Ghibellines of Arezzo. He was drowned in the Arno; according to some accounts, while engaged in pursuing the Bostoli (a family of exiled Aretine Guefts, who had taken refuge in the Castel di Rondine), according to others, while being pursued by them after the battle of Campaldino (for which see the preceding canto).—Federico Novello, a member of the great Conti Guidi family, was slain by one of the Bostoli at Campaldino, while assisting the Tarlati.

17, 18. It seems probable that Marzucco, of the Pisan Scornigiani family, "showed his fortitude" by pardoning the murderer of his son; though other authorities declare that he slew the assassin.

19. This murder points to a continuation of the feud between the brothers Alessandro and Napoleone degli Alberti, alluded to in *Inf.* xxxii. 41-60: for Count Orso was the son of Napoleone, and his murderer Alberto the son of Alessandro.

19-24. Pierre de la Brosse was surgeon and afterwards chamberlain of King Philip III. of France. On the sudden death, in 1276, of Louis, Philip's son by his first wife, and heir to the throne, his second wife, Mary of Brabant, was suspected of having poisoned him, so that her own son might succeed. Among her accusers was Pierre de la Brosse. She determined to poison all minds against him and bring about his downfall. According to popular tradition, she accused him of having made an attempt on her honour; but as Pierre was eventually (in 1278) hanged on a charge of treasonable correspondence with Philip's enemy, Alfonso X. of Castile, it seems more probable that she attained her end by causing these letters to be forged.

28-30, 40-42. Among the persons Aeneas meets in hell is his former pilot, Palinurus, who, having been drowned at sea, is not allowed to cross the Acheron for a hundred years: that being the penalty imposed on the souls of those who have not been duly interred. He entreats Aeneas to take him across the river, whereupon the Sibyl rebukes him with the words: "Cease to hope that the decrees of the Gods are to be altered by prayers" (*Aen.* vi. 372). These words are addressed to a heathen and to a spirit in hell. Note that Aeneas, whose aid is invoked by Palinurus, is a heathen, too, and does not fulfil the conditions of *Purg.* iv. 133-135; xi. 33.

58 *sqq.* Sordello, one of the most distinguished among the Italian poets who elected to write in Provençal rather than in their mother-tongue, was born at Goito, some ten miles from Mantua, about the year 1200. He led a chequered and wandering life, the latter portion of which was devoted to the service of Charles of Anjou, by whom he was well rewarded. The latest record of him that has come down to us is dated 1269. To the Dante student one episode of Sordello's life and one of his poems are of special interest. Between the years 1227-1229, while staying at Treviso with Ezzelino III. of Romano, he had a liaison with the latter's sister Cunizza (see *Par.* ix. 25-36), who was the wife of Count Ricciardo di San Bonifazio, but whom Sordello had abducted (for political reasons) at the request of her brother. When the latter discovered the intrigue Sordello was forced to flee to Provence. About the year 1240 he wrote a very fine *planch* (or song of lamentation) on the death of Blacatz, himself a poet and one of the barons of Count Raymond Berenger IV. In this poem the leading sovereigns and princes of Europe are exhorted to eat of the dead man's heart, so that their courage may increase, and they be fired on to noble deeds. These verses may have indirectly inspired the patriotic outburst for which the appearance of Sordello is made the pretext; and they certainly induced Dante to assign to Sordello the task of pointing out the princes in the following canto.—There is a reference to Sordello in the *Vulg. Eloq.* i. 15: 9-14.

88, 89. One of the many passages to be found throughout Dante's works, which show that what was really in his mind when he spoke of the Roman Empire as an executive power adequate to enforce Roman law. (For Justinian in this connection, *cf. Par.* vi., *Argument*. Much confusion in medieval thought, and much difficulty in understanding Dante's position arises from the fact that the King of the Germans was the feudal head of the territorial nobility who represented the invaders and conquerors of Italy, whereas the Emperor of Rome was the traditional champion of Roman law and civilisation which represent the native Italian aspirations; and since the King of Germany and the Emperor of Rome were one and the same person, it was possible to regard him as the representative of either of the two conflicting tendencies and ideals, on the clash of which the whole medieval history of Italy turns.

91-96. These lines are addressed to the priests, who should leave all secular rule to the Emperor.

97-105. Both Rudolf (for whom see the following canto) (*vv.* 94-96) and his son Albert I. (Emperor from 1298-1308) neglected Italy (*vv.* 103-105): the former devoted his attention to Austria and Suabia, while a specimen of the latter's activity is given in *Par.* xix. 115-117. Verses 100-101 refer, by anticipation, to Albert's violent death, at the hands of his nephew, John. Albert was succeeded by Henry VII. of Luxemburg (*v.* 102), on whom Dante rested all his hopes (see Gardner, pp. 30-34; *cf.*, too, the following canto, *v.* 96, and *Par.* xvii. 82; xxx. 133 *sqq.*).

106, 107. Shakespeare has so familiarised us with the feud of the Veronese Montagues and Capulets, that a hint from the old commentators to the effect that the Monaldi and Fillipeschi were hostile families of Orvieto is sufficient to assure us that Dante is here giving us two examples of the internal strife so common in the Italian cities of those days. The reference appears to be to party strife in general, not to the factions of the Guelfs and Ghibellines in particular. A more recent interpretation, according to which all the four names are those of Ghibelline families belonging to different towns and requiring the aid of the Emperor, falls to the ground, because at least one of the families (the Monaldi) was certainly Guelf.

111. Santaflora—a country in the Sienese Maremma, held for almost five centuries by the great Ghibelline family of the Aldobrandeschi (see below, Canto xi. 58 *sqq.*). These were constantly at war with the commune of Siena, till the year 1300 when an agreement was arrived at.

125. Marcellus, *i.e.*, an opponent of the empire [Marcellus, the Roman consul, was one of Caesar's most violent opponents].

CANTO VII

6. Octavian, the Emperor Augustus (*cf.* above, Canto iii. 27, *note*).

7, 8 and 25-36. See *Inf.* iv. 25-42.

44, 49-57. The symbolism is clear if we bear in mind the analogy between the sun (*v.* 54) and God.

82. *Salve Regina*, the famous antiphon invoking the aid of the Virgin Mary. It is sung after vespers.

91-102. The Emperor Rudolf I. (1218-1272-1292; see the preceding canto, *vv.* 102-105) began by serving under Ottocar II., King of Bohemia (1253-1278); but on his election as Emperor he asserted his supremacy. Ottocar's refusal to acknowledge it gave rise to hostilities which ended in his defeat and death in a battle near Vienna (1278). Ottocar's son, Wenceslas IV. (1278-1305), was permitted to retain Bohemia (*vv.* 98, 99), but had to yield Austria, Styria, Carinthia and Carniola to Rudolf, who placed them under the rule of his own sons, Albert and Rudolf.

103-111. Philip III., the Bold, of France (1245-1270-1285), the "small nosed one," was in 1285 defeated (*v.* 105) by Roger di Loria, the admiral of Peter III. of Aragon (see the following note), whose crown he was attempting to seize on behalf of his son, Charles of Valois, and with the connivance of Pope Martin IV. Philip's son, Philip IV., the Fair (1268-1285-1314; one of Dante's pet aversions: see *Inf.* xix. 87; *Purg.* xx. 91; xxxii. 152; *Par.* xix. 118-120), married Joan, the daughter of Henry, the Fat, of Navarre (1270-1274; *v.* 104); and it is the young man's wickedness that is here uniting his father and his father-in-law in a common sorrow.

112-114. Peter III. of Aragon (1276-1285) and his former enemy, Charles I. of Anjou (1220-1285; King of Naples and Sicily, 1266-1282), respectively. When Charles was driven from the throne of Sicily after the terrible outbreak known as the "Sicilian Vespers," he was succeeded by Peter, whose claim to the crown was based on his marriage with Constance, the daughter of Manfred, King of Sicily. In spite of strenuous efforts, Charles was never able to regain the kingdom.—Note that Peter III. and both his French foes, Charles I. of Anjou and Philip III. (uncle and nephew), all died in the same year, 1285.

115-120. Peter III. of Aragon had three sons, Alfonso III. (King of Aragon, 1285-1291), the "lad"; James II. (King of Sicily, 1285-1296, King of Aragon, 1291-1327); and Frederick II. (King of Sicily, 1296-1337). In the present passage Alfonso is praised, while the other two are termed degenerate. The blame is repeated in *Par.* xix. 130; xx. 63; *Conv.* iv. 6; *De Vulg. El.* i. 12. But *Purg.* iii. 116 raises a difficulty. The verse cannot apply to Alfonso, who was never King of Sicily. The "Renown" of Sicily is generally taken to be Frederick, and the "Renown" of Aragon, James. There is no inconsistency here if we consider that Manfred is speaking of his grandsons, and assume that the view expressed is his rather than Dante's. Some scholars reject this theory on the ground that it is inadmissible to regard the repentant Manfred as displaying a mere family pride, and hold that, at a certain period of his life, Dante lapsed into an unprejudiced and just estimate of James and Frederick. To those who cannot conscientiously subscribe to either of these two theories, it may be pointed out that, in any case, there is no definite historical inaccuracy. For it was Frederick's very devotion to Sicily that led him to neglect the wider imperial interests of Italy, an omission which probably accounts for Dante's adverse judgment in the other passages (*cf.* the *note* to *Par.* xix. 130-132). With regard to James, it is true that his conduct in Sicilian affairs was dishonourable;

but he must have ruled well in Spain, else his subjects would not have called him "the Just." So that it is, at a stretch, possible to explain the words "of Sicily's and Aragon's renown," even if we take them to represent Dante's own consistent view.

121-123. On the subject of heredity see *Par.* viii. 91-148.

124-129. Charles II. (1243-1309), King of Naples (=Apulia) and Count of Anjou and Provence, is as inferior to his father, Charles I. of Anjou (the "big-nosed one") as this Charles I. (the husband first of Beatrice of Provence and then of Margaret of Burgundy) is inferior to Peter III. of Aragon (the husband of Constance). Dante frequently inveighs against Charles II. (see *Purg.* xx. 79-81; *Par.* xix. 127-129; xx. 62, 63; *Conv.* iv. 6: 182, 3; *De Vulg. El.* i. 12: 36-38); in return for which he once gives him a word of praise (*Par.* viii. 82, 83).

130-132. Henry III., the pious King of England (1216-1226-1272), who formed so strong a contrast to his active and warlike son, Edward I. (1239-1272-1307). It is worth noting that Henry's wife, Eleanor of Provence, was a sister of the Beatrice mentioned in v. 128.

133-136. William, Marquis of Montferrat and Canavese (1254-1292), at one time favoured Charles I. of Anjou, but subsequently became the chief of a formidable league against him, which was joined by several important towns, including Alessandria (in Piedmont). Some of these towns at times rebelled, and in 1290 Alessandria rose against him. While attempting to quell this disturbance, he was captured by the citizens, and exhibited by them in an iron cage for seventeen months (till his death in 1292). William's son, John I., tried to avenge his father; but his efforts ended in failure, for the Alessandrines invaded Montferrat and captured several places.

CANTO VIII

13. The Ambrosian hymn, *Te lucis ante terminum*, sung at Compline (the last office of the day).

19-39. In addition to the general explanation given in the *Argument*, the following points should be noted. The green robes and wings of the angels speak of hope. The pointless swords are usually taken to indicate justice tempered with mercy (*cf.* below, Canto xxxi. 42, *note*); but perhaps they mean that the battle is in truth already decided, the deadly thrust no longer needed, and that the sword-edge alone is adequate (see below, Canto xxxi. 2, 3).

47-84. Nino de' Visconti of Pisa (for whom see *Inf.* xxii. 83, *note*, and xxxiii. 1-90, *note*) was appointed by the Pisans to the judgeship of Gallura in Sardinia, in the last decade of the 13th century. He married Beatrice of Este, by whom he had a daughter, Giovanna [v. 71; it is interesting to note that in 1328 the Commune of Florence voted a pension of 100 *piccoli fiorini* to this Giovanna, on account of her father's faith and devotion to Florence and the Guelph party, for the injuries and vexations he had suffered from the Ghibellines, and as compensation for the spoliation of all her goods by the Ghibellines]. After his death, Beatrice married Galeazzo Visconti, of Milan; the formalities were probably completed by Easter, 1300, but the ceremony did not actually take place till June of that year. Verse 74 refers to casting off the garb of widowhood (black robe and white veil), and v. 75 to the misfortunes of the Milanese Visconti, which date from 1302. The viper and the cock (*vv.* 80, 81) indicate the arms of the Milanese and Pisan Visconti, respectively. These two families appear to have been in no way connected with each other; the former were Ghibelline, the latter Guelph.

85-93. It must be steadily borne in mind that only half the heavens are visible to Dante at this point of the journey. The steep wall of Purgatory cuts off the whole portion of them west of the meridian. The four bright stars are near the

south pole; but in the latitude of Purgatory the pole itself is only about 32° above the horizon, and the stars are now behind the mountain and beneath the pole.

65, 109-139. Currado I. of the Malaspina family ("the elder" of v. 119) was grandfather of the three cousins, Currado II. (d. ca. 1294), the present speaker; Moroello III. (d. ca. 1315), to whom Dante's third epistle, accompanied by Canzone xi., is probably addressed, and for whom see *Inf.* xxiv. 143-150, note; and Franceschino (d. between 1313 and 1321), who was Dante's host at Sarzana, in Lunigiana, in the autumn of 1306 (vv. 133-139: less than seven years—the sun now being in Aries—from the moment at which Currado is speaking). The Malaspini were for the most part Ghibellines; but Moroello III. formed a notable exception. *Valdimacra* (v. 116): the Macra flows through Lunigiana (north-west of Tuscany), which formed part of the territory of the Malaspini (cf. *Inf.* xxiv. 145).

"Wax" (v. 113) material to feed the flame of God's grace; the "enamelled summit" being either the summit of the Mount of Purgatory or the Empyrean. With v. 131 compare xvi. 94-112; though some refer the words specifically to Boniface VIII.

CANTO IX

1-9. Dante never distinguishes between the signs and the constellations of the Zodiac; that is to say, he disregards the phenomena which he held to be the proper motion of the sphere of the stars (cf. *Vita Nuova*, § ii. 9-12 and *Conv.* ii. 3: 36-45; 15: 102-118). It is the phenomenon known in modern astronomy as the precession of the equinoxes. Perhaps the reason why Dante did not make this correction was that he regarded it as counterbalanced by the error of the Julian calendar (see *Par.* xxvii. 142, 143, note), in the other direction. Thus, he would regard the day on which, by the uncorrected calendar, the sun enters the constellation of Aries as coinciding with the day on which, by the corrected calendar, he would be in the real equinox, i.e. the first point of the sign of Aries. He chose, therefore, to take his ideal equinox rather by calendar and constellation than by the strict astronomical equinoctial point. This seems to be the meaning of *Inf.* i. 38-40, and may account for his treating the statement that the sun was at the equinoctial point at the time of his journey now as an exact statement (*Par.* x. 31-33), and now as an approximation (*Par.* i. 44). This premised, a reference to the chronological note will show that the retardation of the moon now amounted to two hours and thirty-six minutes, and that she was therefore in the constellation of Scorpio. Of the six hours in which the night rises, two were gone, and the third had just passed the summit of its course. The lunar aurora was therefore on the horizon. By a somewhat odd analogy she is called the "mistress" of Tithonus because she is a spurious aurora, and the genuine Aurora was the "wife" of Tithonus.

15. See below, Canto xvii. 19-21, note.

19-33. The eagle, in the "Bestiaries," is said to fly up in his old age into the circle of fire, where he burns off all his feathers and falls blinded into a fountain of water, whence he issues with his youth renewed. This is a symbol of baptismal regeneration. And here Dante, true to the ethical note which pervades the Purgatory, connects him with moral rather than with ceremonial purification by connecting him with Troy, i.e. Rome, i.e. the Empire, law and justice: for Ganymede (whose beauty had attracted Jupiter, and who, having been borne aloft by an eagle while hunting with his friends on Mount Ida in Mysia, became the cup-bearer of the Gods) was the son of Tros, an ancestor of Aeneas.

This is the first of three dreams or visions (for the others see below, Cantos xix. and xxvii.), each of which takes place shortly before dawn (the time being in-

icated in a *terzina* beginning with the words "Then at the hour"—see above *v.* 13, and, in the other cantos, *vv.* 1 and 94, respectively) and is a forecast of the events immediately following.

34-39. See *Inf.* xxvi. 62, *note*. The amazement of Achilles is recorded by Statius (*Achill.* i. 247 *sqq.*).

55. For Lucy, who must be more or less closely identified with the eagle of Dante's dream, see *Inf.* ii. 97, 98, *note*.

78. "Warden." This angel represents the priest confessor.

82-84. The sword of Divine Justice, whose ways are inscrutable to men.

99. "Fissured," perhaps because contrition breaks the stubbornness of the heart.

104, 105. The stone of adamant possibly indicates the firmness and constancy of the confessor.

112. Kraus connects the seven P's not only with the seven *peccata* (sins), but with the seven scrutinies as well, which figured in the Roman Liturgy till the end of the 12th century, and formed part of the service on the seven Sundays from the first in Lent to Easter Sunday.

115, 116. This hue appears to be a token of the humility with which the confessor should exercise his function.

117-129. Cf. *Par.* v. 55-57, *note*.

136-138. Metellus, a follower of Pompey, made a futile effort to protect the Roman treasury (kept in the temple of Saturn on Mons Tarpeius) against Caesar (B.C. 49). Lucan (*Phars.* iii. 153-168) lays special stress on the noise made by the opening of the temple gates on this occasion.

140. The famous Ambrosian hymn, sung at matins and on solemn occasions. Some commentators refer to *Luke* xv. 10, and connect the present singing of the hymn with the entry of a soul into Purgatory.

CANTO X

2. "Evil love." See below, Canto xvii. 103-105.

32. The Greek sculptor Polycletus (ca. B.C. 452-412) is lauded by a number of classical writers known in the Middle Ages, and his art is extolled by Italian poets prior to Dante.

34-45. The Annunciation (see *Luke* i.). Note that the first example of the virtue opposed to the vice punished on the seven terraces (here, humility as opposed to pride) is, in each case, an episode drawn from the life of the Virgin Mary.

55-63. For David dancing before the Ark, see 2 *Sam.* vi.

73-93. This version of the popular Trajan story is apparently derived from the *Fiore di Filosofi*, which used to be erroneously attributed to Brunetto Latini. The incident is again alluded to in *Par.* xx. 44, 45. The ethical bearings of the legend that Pope Gregory's intercession brought about Trajan's recall from Hell, so that the Emperor might have a respite for repentance (*vv.* 74, 75), are discussed in *Par.* xx. 106-117 (see *notes*). The reference in *vv.* 80, 81, is to the metal (gold-bronze) eagle, the outspread wings of which might seem to be fluttering in the wind.

CANTO XI

49-72. Umberto, Count of Santaflora, in the Sienese Maremma, was a member of the Aldobrandeschi family, for which see above, Canto vi. 111, *note*. He was put to death at Campagnatico in 1259 by the Sienese, who had long been at warfare with the family and were anxious to be rid of their authority. The mode of Umberto's death is variously given.

74 *sqq.* Oderisi (of Gubbio in Umbria), an illuminator and miniature painter. He appears to have been at Rome in 1295, for the purpose (so says Vasari) of illuminating some MSS. in the Papal Library for Boniface VIII. According to the same authority, the work on that occasion was shared by Franco of Bologna.

94-96. The works of the Florentine painter Cimabue (*ca.* 1240-*ca.* 1302) are instinct with genius, and mark a considerable advance on the stiff Byzantine school; but it was reserved for his pupil, Giotto (1266-1336), to draw his inspiration at the fount of Nature herself, and to become the father of modern painting.—Giotto is said to have been a friend of Dante's, and the well-known Bargello portrait of the poet is doubtfully attributed to him.

97-99. The interpretation of these verses given in the *Argument* is not the one usually adopted; the view generally held being that the two Guidos are Guido Guinicelli (see below, Canto xxvi.) and Guido Cavalcanti (see *Inf.* x. 60, *note*), and that Dante himself is the poet destined to eclipse the latter. Against this more obvious interpretation, it may be urged that it would be out of keeping with the general tone of the passage; and specifically with xii. 7-9. Moreover, there is no indication in Dante's works of his regarding Guido Guinicelli as a superseded worthy, or distinguishing between the schools of these two Guidos; although he repeatedly contrasts the school of Guido (or Guittone) of Arezzo with the new school of which he regarded Guido Guinicelli as the chief, and Guido Cavalcanti and himself as disciples (xxvi. 97-99; see, further, xxiv. 55-63, xxvi. 124-126; *De Vulg. El.* i. 13: 7, 8; ii. 6: 85-89). On the other hand it may be advanced in favour of the more popular theory, that, whatever Dante may say in other passages, Guido Cavalcanti and the other Florentines actually did write poetry superior to that of Guido Guinicelli; that a pupil may surpass his teacher and yet regard him with affection and admiration; that Dante would probably have used the form *Guittone* in this passage, so as to make his meaning clear; and that the prophecy may well refer to our poet himself, who, though in the circle of the Proud, is probably as conscious of his literary greatness now as he was in Limbo (see *Inf.* iv. 100-105).

109-138. Provenzan Salvani, a Ghibelline, was chief in authority among the Sienese at the time of the battle of Montaperti; and after the defeat of the Florentines he was the strongest advocate in favour of the destruction of their city (*vv.* 112-114; see *Inf.* x. 85-87, 91-93, *notes*). He once humbled himself by affecting the garb and manner of a beggar in the market-place of Siena, so as to procure the money wherewith to ransom a friend, who was the prisoner of Charles of Anjou. Provenzan was eventually defeated and slain (June 1269) in an engagement with the Florentines at Colle, in Valdelsa (see below, Canto xiii. 115-119).

127-131. See above, Canto iv. 130-135.

140-142. A prophecy of Dante's exile from Florence (1302). The poet will know from bitter experience what it is to live on the charity of others (*cf.* *Par.* xvii. 58-60).

CANTO XII

25-27. Satan (*cf.* *Luke* x. 18).—Not only are the examples of the vices drawn alternately from sacred and profane history like those of the virtues; but, within certain limits, as Dr. Moore has pointed out, the two sets of examples on each terrace correspond numerically. On the first, third, fourth, and seventh terraces, the correspondence is exact; on the second and fifth it becomes so, if we divide the second set into groups; while on the sixth there is apparently no attempt at carrying out the design.

28-30. Briarëus (for whom, see *Inf.* xxxi. 98, *note*) must be separated from the other giants. The parallels are, Lucifer: Briarëus; the Giants: Nimrod.

31-32. Jupiter, Apollo (called Thymbraeus, from his temple at Thymbra in the Troad), Minerva and Mars, having defeated and slain the giants, are gazing upon their scattered limbs.

34-36. For Nimrod, see *Inf.* xxxi. 46-81, *note*.

37-39. Niobe, the wife of Amphon, King of Thebes, was so proud of her fourteen children that she offended Latona, who had only two—Apollo and Diana. These latter, in revenge, shot all the fourteen with their arrows, and Niobe herself was changed by Jupiter into a stone statue, lifeless save for the tears it shed (see Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 146-312).

40-42. Saul, after his defeat by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa, "took a sword and fell upon it" (1 *Sam.* xxxi. 1-4). Verse 42 refers to the words of David's lament on the death of Saul: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings" (2 *Sam.* i. 21).

43-45. Arachne of Lydia, having boasted of her skill in weaving (*cf.* *Inf.* xvii. 18), and challenged Minerva to a contest, was eventually changed by the goddess into a spider for her presumption (see Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 1-145).

46-48. The ten tribes revolted against Rehoboam, King of Israel, because he refused to lighten their taxes. "Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore King Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem" (1 *Kings* xii. 1-18).

52-54. Sennacherib, King of Assyria, was defeated by Hezekiah, King of Judah, and subsequently slain by his own sons (2 *Kings* xix. 37).

55-57. Cyrus, founder of the Persian Empire (B.C. 560-529), treacherously murdered the son of Tomyris, the Scythian queen, whereupon he was himself defeated and slain by the outraged mother. She had his head cast into a vessel filled with blood, and scoffed at it, saying: *Satis te sanguine quem sitisti cujus per annos triginta insatiabilis perseverasti* (Orosius, ii. 7, § 6). *Cf.* *De Mon.* ii. 9: 43-48.

58-60. When Holofernes, one of Nebuchadnezzar's captains, was besieging Bethulia, the Jewish widow Judith obtained access to his tent and cut off his head. This she had displayed on the walls of the city; whereupon the Assyrian host took to flight, pursued by the Jews (*Judith* x.-xiv.).

61-63. *Cf.* *Inf.* i. 75; xxx. 13-15; see, too, *Aen.* iii. 2, 3: *Ceciditque superbum Ilium*.

80. It is therefore just past noon. The conception of the hours as hand-maidens serving the day is repeated below, in Canto xxii. 118.

100-102. The church of San Miniato commands Florence across the Rubaconte bridge [*i.e.* Miniato is not *above* the bridge].—"The sober town," as applied to Florence, is, of course, ironical.

105. See *Par.* xvi. 56 and 105, *notes*.

110. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven" (*Matth.* v. 3). Towards the end of Dante's sojourn on each terrace, he hears one of the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount.

CANTO XIII

22. The expression "so far as men will count a mile" (that is to say, "if you think of walking a mile, you will get the right impression"), is an indication which should be carefully noted, that we must not expect to be able to arrive at any consistent representation by exact matter-of-fact measurements in Hell and Purgatory. Dante was well acquainted with the approximate size of the earth (*Conv.* iii. 5: 100-105, and elsewhere), and cannot represent himself, for example,

as having literally climbed from the centre to the circumference in something under 24 hours. He is content to avoid all glaring errors of principle, and to make several scenes realisable (*cf. Inf. xxx. 86, 87, note*).

28-30. At the marriage in Cana. "And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine" (*John ii. 3*).

32, 33. Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, renowned for his friendship with Pylades. When Orestes was condemned to death, Pylades wished to take his place, saying that he was Orestes. Cicero alludes to this incident in a passage of the *De Amicitia* (§ 7) which was certainly known to Dante.

35, 36. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (*Matt. v. 44*).

39-42. The examples of charity are the "whip," the examples of envy, the "bridle" (*cf. below, Canto xiv. 143-147*); and for the "Pass of Pardon" (of which there is, of course, one on each terrace), see, in the present case, Canto xv. 35, 36.

51, 52. The Litany of the Saints, in which, after the Trinity, are invoked the Virgin Mary, the archangel Michael with the other angels, St. Peter with the other apostles, and finally the other saints.

100 *sqq.* Sapia, a noble lady of Siena, the wife of Viviano dei Saracini, lord of Castiglioncello. She was filled with envy of her fellow-citizens, and rejoiced at their defeat under Provenzan Salvani at Colle (see above, Canto xi. 109-138, *note*). In 1265 she assisted her husband in founding a hospice for wayfarers, and after his death (1269) she made a grant of his castle to the commune of Siena. These acts of generosity supply a gloss to *vv. 124, 125*; and the latter of the two also proves that she must have become reconciled to the Sienese shortly after their rout (1269).

121-123. According to a popular Italian tradition and proverb, the blackbird, at the close of January, cries out: "I fear thee no more, O Lord, now that the winter is behind me." Sapia meant to imply that, now she had obtained the dearest wish of her heart, she had no more need or fear of God.

127-129. Pier, a native of Chianti, was a Franciscan who had settled at Siena, where he died in 1289. He was renowned for his piety, and long venerated as a saint, his festival being officially recognised in 1328.

151-154. Siena still preserves two documents, dated 1295 and 1303 respectively; the former of which refers to a resolution to search for the stream of Diana, which was supposed to flow beneath the city; and the latter, to the purchase (for 8000 gold florins, from the Abbot of San Salvatore) of the small port of Talamone (on the Tyrrhenian Sea, S.W. of the Sienese Maremma), which would have been a useful outlet to the sea, if only the creek could have been kept clear of sand and mud. Both projects failed (at any rate in Dante's time); and in the latter enterprise a number of admirals [perhaps=contractors, as some early commentators think], directing the dredging operations, lost their lives (*v. 154*) owing to the unhealthiness of the place.

CANTO XIV

1 *sqq.* These words are spoken by Guido del Duca (who bears the brunt of the speaking throughout the canto) and Rinier da Calboli (who does most of the listening), respectively.

Guido del Duca, a Ghibelline of Bertinoro, belonged to the Onesti family of Ravenna (other members of which were Pietro and Romualdo; see *Par. xxi. and xxii.*). In 1199 he was judge to the Podestà of Rimini. For years (from 1202, or even earlier) he was an adherent of the Ghibelline leader, Pier Traversaro

(v. 98). In 1218, Pier, aided principally by the Mainardi (v. 97) of Bertinoro, obtained the chief power at Ravenna, and drove out the Guelfs; whereupon the latter attacked Bertinoro, destroyed the houses of the Mainardi, and expelled Pier's adherents. Among these was Guido, who followed his chief to Ravenna, and the last preserved record of whom is a deed signed by him in that city in 1229.

Rinier, belonging to the Guelf family of Da Calboli, of Forlì, was Podestà of Faenza (1247), of Parma (1252), and of Ravenna (1265; and again in 1292). In 1276 he attacked Forlì (assisted by other Guelfs, among them Lizio da Valbona; v. 97); but the force had to retire to Rinier's castle of Calboli (in the valley of Montone), where they surrendered to Guido of Montefeltro, the Captain of Forlì, who destroyed the stronghold. When Rinier was re-elected Podestà of Faenza in 1292, the captain of the city was Mainardo Pagano (v. 118). The citizens, supported by their leaders, opposed a tax levied on them by the Count of Romagna. The expedition against him and the Ghibellines on his side (including the Count of Castrocaro, v. 116) was entirely successful. In 1294 the Da Calboli, who were becoming too powerful in Forlì, were expelled by the Ghibellines; but they returned, together with other exiled Guelfs, in 1296, when the bulk of their enemies were absent on an expedition against Bologna. Shortly afterwards, however, the Guelfs were again routed and expelled by the Ghibellines, led among others by one of the Ordelaffi. On this occasion the aged Rinier was slain.

Guido's invective against Romagna (vv. 91-123 of the present canto) should be compared with *Inf.* xxvii. 37-54.

16, 18 and 31-36. Falterona is a summit of the Tuscan Apennines (N.E. of Florence), where the Arno has its source. "Rugged," as applied to Falterona, may refer either to the rivers, or to the secondary mountain chains, springing from it; taken in conjunction with v. 33, the latter is, geographically, the more correct interpretation. Peloro (the modern Cape Faro; cf. *Par.* viii. 68) is at the N.E. extremity of Sicily, being separated from the end of the Apennines only by the Strait of Messina; geologically, the Sicilian mountains are, of course, only a continuation of the Apennines.—After a course of about 150 miles, the Arno flows into the Mediterranean Sea (v. 34—as far as the sea: for the vapours exhaled by the sea through the heat of the sun come down again as rain, swell the rivers and are thus eventually restored to the sea—vv. 34-36).

37-54. Dante conceives the inhabitants of the Val d'Arno to have been, as it were, transformed into beasts by the enchantress Circe, who was endowed with this power. Thus the people of Casentino (see above, Canto v. 85-129, *note*) have become hogs, the Aretines—curs, the Florentines—wolves, and the Pisans—foxes.

58-66. Rinier's grandson, Fulcieri da Calboli, was Podestà of various cities—Milan, Parma, and Modena, but is chiefly notorious for his tenure of that office at Florence (1303), where he proved himself a bitter foe of the Whites and Ghibellines (see Villani, viii. 59).—"The wood" (v. 64)=Florence; cf. *Inf.* i. 2, *note*.

86, 87. See the following canto, vv. 44-81.

91-123. The people mentioned in these lines were all inhabitants of the Romagna (the limits of which are defined in v. 92, as the Po and the Apennines, the Adriatic and the Reno; for the latter cf. *Inf.* xviii. 61). For some of the names see above, *note* to v. 1 *sqq.*

Lizio da Valbona, a Guelf nobleman of Bertinoro and follower of Rinier da Calboli; he died between 1279 and 1300.—Arrigo Mainardi, a Ghibelline of Bertinoro and adherent of Pier Traversaro, together with whom he was captured by the people of Faenza in 1170; he was still alive in 1228.—Pier Traversaro (ca. 1145-1225), the most distinguished member of the Ghibelline family of "The Traversaran House" (v. 107); he was repeatedly Podestà of his native city, and

played a leading part in the politics of Romagna for many years.—Guido of the Carpegna (a noted family settled in the district of Montefeltro) was renowned for his liberality.—Fabbro, one of the Ghibelline Lambertazzi of Bologna, was Podestà of several cities. After his death, in 1259, his sons had a bitter feud with the Geremei (see *Inf.* xxxii. 122, 123, *note*).—Bernardin di Fosco distinguished himself in the siege of Faenza against the Emperor Frederick II. (1240); his father was a field labourer.—Guido da Prata (d. ca. 1245), a native of Ravenna, near which city he appears to have owned considerable property.—Ugolin d'Azzo, a wealthy inhabitant of Faenza, one of the Ubaldini (*cf.* below, Canto xxiv. 29, *note*). He married Beatrice Lancia, the daughter of Provenzan Salvani (see above, Canto xi.) and died at a great age in 1293.—Frederico Tignoso: a nobleman of Rimini, noted for his generosity, who appears to have lived in the first half of the 13th century.—The Traversari and Anastagi were noble Ghibelline families of Ravenna. On the death of Pier Traversaro, his son Paolo turned Guelph—a *volte-face* that soon undermined the influence of the family. About the middle of the 13th century, the Anastagi were very much to the fore, owing to their strife with the Polentani and other Guelphs of Ravenna. A reconciliation was effected ca. 1258, and after this date there is no mention of them in the records.—Brettinoro (now Bertinoro), a little town between Forlì and Cesena; its inhabitants, several of whom figure in this canto, had a great reputation for hospitality. Dante is apparently alluding here to the compulsory exodus of the Ghibellines from the town (see above, *note* on Guido del Duca), and rejoicing that they were spared the spectacle of the place in its present condition.—The Malavicini, Counts of Bagnacavallo (between Imola and Ravenna), were Ghibellines. In 1249 they drove Guido da Polenta and his fellow Guelphs from Ravenna. Subsequently they were notorious for their frequent change of party.—Castrocaro and Conio: strongholds near Forlì; the counts of the former place were Ghibellines, those of the latter Guelphs.—The Pagani were Ghibellines of Faenza (or Imola). For Mainardo see *Inf.* xxvii. 49-51, *note* (*cf.* Villani, vii. 149). According to Benvenuto, he was called "devil" because of his cunning.—Ugolino de' Fantolini (d. 1278) did not take part in public affairs, but led an honourable retired life. One of his sons was killed at Forlì (1282) in the engagement with Guido of Montefeltro (see *Inf.* xxvii. 43, 44), and the other died before 1291.

132-135. The words of Cain, after he had slain his brother Abel (*Gen.* iv. 14).

137-139. Aglauros, the daughter of Cecrops, King of Athens, being jealous of Mercury's love for her sister, Hersè, was changed by the God into stone (see Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 139).

CANTO XV

1-6. The Zodiac, which is improperly described as a sphere (instead of a zone or great circle on the sphere), is compared to a skipping child, because in the course of the day its extremities on the horizon play up and down, and the semi-circle above the horizon is now all north of the equator, now all south, and now crossing it from north to south, or from south to north. At the equinox a quarter of it crosses the eastern horizon between sunrise and nine o'clock. Dante tells us, therefore, that, at the moment of which he is speaking, a quarter of it had to cross the western horizon before sunset, i.e. it was three o'clock in the afternoon (here, in Italy, it was midnight, for Roman time is nine hours later than Purgatory time, and there it was Vespers, or 3 P.M.; see above, Canto iii. 25-27, *note*).

7-9. The representations of the Mount of Purgatory given in the editions of the *Commedia* usually depict the poets as having circled the whole mountain in the course of their journey. But this is erroneous. They circle only the northern or sunny side, from east to west. Here, towards the close of the day, they are travelling almost due west, and are almost at the northern point of the mountain.

38, 39. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (*Matth. v. 7*).—The words "Thou that overcomest," etc., are variously referred to *Matth. v. 12*; *Rom. xii. 21*; or *Rev. ii. 7*.

44, 45. See the preceding canto, *vv. 86, 87*.

85-93. Mary's words to the child Jesus, after he had "tarried behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and his mother knew not of it." See *Luke ii. 43-50*.

94-105. *Pisistratus Atheniensium tyrannus* [*ca. B.C. 605-527*], *cum adolescens quidam, amore filiae ejus virginis accensus, in publico obviam sibi factam osculatus esset, hortante uxore, ut ab eo capitale supplicium sumeret, respondit: "Si cos, qui nos amant, interficimus, quid his faciemus, quibus odio sumus?"* (*Valerius Maximus, Fact. et dict. mem. vi. 1*). Verse 98 alludes to the strife between Minerva and Neptune, as to which of them should name the city of Athens (see *Ovid, Metam. vi. 70 sqq.*).

106-114. The stoning of Stephen (*Acts vii. 54-60*).

117. Dante recognised that the scenes which had passed before him were merely visions (*errori*), though visions of events that had actually occurred in times gone by (therefore, *non falsi*).

CANTO XVI

17-19. See *John i. 29*; though the reference here is rather to the prayer in the Mass—*Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis, dona nobis pacem*.

25 *sqq.* The speaker is Marco Lombardo, of Venice, a learned and honourable courtier, noted for his liberality, who flourished in the latter half of the 13th century.

27. As though thou wert still alive. In the eternal regions human measurements of time do not apply.

37. "With those swathings," *i.e.* with my body.

80. The free will by its nature seeks good (*Par. xxxiii. 103*, etc.), and since God is the supreme good, the free agent is subject to him in the sense that the whole course of his action is determined by him as its goal. But this determination of the will to good is the fulfilment, not the restrictions of liberty. The idea is familiar to us from the words of the Prayer Book: . . . "whose service is perfect freedom."

97. See above, Canto vi. 88-90, *note*.

98, 99. "Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you" (*Lev. xi. 4*). According to Thomas Aquinas the "chewing of the cud" signifies meditation and understanding of the Scriptures; while the "cloven hoof" stands for the power to discern and distinguish between certain sacred things—here used apparently of the spiritual and temporal power (which are, of course, not mentioned by Aquinas).

115-117. Lombardy, or, in the wider sense, Upper Italy—a veritable hot-bed of dissension, by reason of the struggle between the Emperor Frederick II. and the Pope.

124-126, 133-140. Currado da Palazzo, a Guelph of Brescia, Vicar for Charles of Anjou at Florence (1276), Podestà of Siena (1279) and of Piacenza (1288).

Gherardo da Cammino, Captain-General of Treviso from 1283 till his death in 1306 (when he was succeeded by his son Riccardo; see *Par. ix. 50 sqq.*). The commentators differ as to whether his daughter Gaia (*v. 140*), who died in 1311, was renowned for her virtue or notorious for her loose morals; probably the latter is the correct interpretation. Dante once again takes Gherardo as a type of nobility in the *Conv. iv. 14: 114-123*.

Guido da Castel was a gentleman of Treviso, famed for his bounty and hospitality.

131, 132. So that they might confine themselves to spiritual affairs. See *Num.* xviii. 20, *Deut.* xviii. 2, *Josh.* xiii. 14; and *cf.* *De Mon.* iii. 13, 64-76.

CANTO XVII

18. Through the influence of the stars, or by Divine will.

19-21. Procne's husband, Tereus, dishonoured her sister Philomela, and cut out her tongue, so as to ensure her silence. The injured girl, however, imparted to her sister the knowledge of what had happened by means of a piece of tapestry; whereupon Procne, in a frenzy, slew her son Itys, and made Tereus unwittingly partake of his flesh at table. On discovering the truth he pursued the sisters with an axe, bent on slaying them; but at their prayer all three were changed into birds. According to Ovid (*Met.* vi. 412-676), whom Dante follows, Procne became a nightingale, and Philomela a swallow (see above, Canto ix. 14, 15).

25-30. See *Esther* iii.-vii. Ahasuerus, King of the Persians, advanced Haman to high honours, till the latter was accused by Esther of having designs on the life of Mordecai. "So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified" (*l.c.* vii. 10).

34-39. Lavinia, daughter of Latinus and Amata, was first betrothed to Turnus, and then promised to Aeneas; whereupon hostilities broke out between the two heroes. In the course of these, Amata (who was opposed to the marriage with Aeneas), thinking that Turnus was killed (though, in point of fact, he was not yet slain) hanged herself in a frenzy of despair (*Aen.* xii. 595 *sqq.*).

62, 63. See above, Canto vii. 44, 53-60.

68, 69. "Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God" (*Matt.* v. 9).

91-139. A careful study of the *Argument*, and of the second paragraph in the note on Dante's Purgatory, will make this important passage clear. See, too, Gardner, pp. 107 and 110.

"Love through reason" (*vv.* 92, 93)=conscious desire, as distinguished from the unconscious trend of inanimate beings (both of which impulses are regarded as "love"); with these lines *cf.* *Conv.* iii. 3, and *Par.* i., especially *vv.* 118-120.—"Primal worths" (*v.* 97), towards God and virtue; "the second" (*v.* 98), towards worldly goods.

CANTO XVIII

22, 23. The apprehensive faculty receives the impression of the concrete thing, form and material alike. According to Albertus Magnus, "the intention is not part of the thing like the form, but rather the appearance of the whole thing as apprehended." [Thus, the form of a statue would not be affected by the nature of the material—marble, bronze, etc., but the intention would].—*Cf.* *Par.* iv. 41, 42 *note*.

29. "Form," *i.e.* its essential principle.

30. The circle of fire.

32. All change or action is regarded in the Aristotelian philosophy as motion. The act of love is a spiritual as distinct from a local movement.

49, 50. These lines contain a definition of the human soul. Thomas Aquinas says that "rational souls" are "forms which are in a certain sense separated, but yet have to abide in material;" which he explains by adding that the intellect is separated inasmuch as it is not "the act of any bodily organ, as the visual

power is of the eye" (see below, Canto xxv. 66, *note*), but is nevertheless the vital principle of a (human) body. Cf., further, Bonaventura: "Spiritual substances [*i.e.* beings] are either completely joined to bodies, as is the case with brute souls, or joined separably to them, as are rational souls, or completely separated from them, as are celestial spirits, which the philosophers call intelligence, and we call angels."

51. A power specific to it as a human soul, *i.e.* belonging to all human souls and to them only. This specific power is that of the "possible intellect," better known to students of English literature as the "discursive" intellect, that is, the intellect which proceeds constructively from the known to the unknown, develops itself and passes from one object to another; as distinct from the "intuitive" intellect of angels, which understands without process of thought and embraces all objects of contemplation at once (*cf. Par. xxix. 32, 33, note; De Mon. i. 3: 45-65; Conv. iii. 3: 34, 35; Paradise Lost, v. 486-490; and see below, Canto xxv. 64-66, note*).

55, 57. "Prime impressions"=the primal or supreme conceptions or notions=the axioms; "prime desires"=the primal or supreme objects of desire=God. The plural form is doubtless used because the supreme good may present itself in many forms (goodness, perfect and noble things, blessedness, truth, supreme existence, supreme unity, etc. etc.), but all of these "supreme objects of desire" are not rivals but rays meeting and coinciding in the focus, God.

63. Ought to be absolute master, whether the will assent or dissent.

73, 74. Note that the Italian idiom reverses our own. Cf. *Vita Nuova*, § 39: *il cuore intendo per l'appetito*, "by the heart I mean the appetite."

79-81. The setting of the sun between Sardinia and Corsica cannot be actually seen from Rome, so that the accuracy of this datum would depend on a rather elaborate calculation, and would be limited by the accuracy of Dante's knowledge of the exact latitude and longitude of the places in question. The modern astronomers give Sagittarius, but Benvenuto da Imola, who perhaps better reflects the state of knowledge in Dante's time, gives Scorpio as the position of the moon indicated. The latter agrees with our other data.

75. See *Par. v. 19 sqq.*

83. Pietola is identical with the classical Andes, Virgil's birthplace.

91-93. The Thebans, when invoking the aid of Bacchus for their vineyards, were wont to crowd to the banks of the Ismenus and Asopus, rivers of Boeotia, near Thebes (*cf. Statius, Theb. ix. 434 sqq.*).

100. After the Annunciation. "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda" (*Luke i. 39*).

101, 102. In order to save time, Caesar left the siege of Marseilles, on which he had been engaged, in the hands of Brutus, and rushed off to Ilerda (the modern Lerida) in Catalonia, where he defeated Afranius and Petreius, the lieutenants of Pompey (B.C. 49). Lucan (*Phars. i. 151-154*), speaks of Caesar as a thunderbolt.

113-126. The speaker is a certain Abbot of San Zeno (a church and monastery at Verona), probably Gherardo II., who died in 1187 (during the reign of Frederick Barbarossa, 1152-1190; Milan was destroyed by the Emperor in 1162, and rebuilt in 1169). He upbraids Alberto della Scala (d. 1301: *v. 121*), for appointing his illegitimate and depraved son, Giuseppe, to the abbacy of San Zeno. Giuseppe held the office from 1291 till 1314, so that Dante may have known him during his first sojourn at Verona (1303-1304).

133-135. The Israelites who, after being delivered from Pharaoh in the Red Sea, still murmured and refused to follow Moses, whereupon they perished in the desert, before reaching the Promised Land (the Jordan=Palestine). See *Ex. xiv. 10-20; Num. xiv. 1-39; Deut. i. 26-36*.

136-138. The Trojans, whom Aeneas left behind in Sicily with Acestes—"as many of the people as were willing, souls that had no desire of high renown" (*Aen.* v. 604 *sqq.*; *cf.* *Conv.* v. 26: 92-96, where the incident is quoted in proof of Aeneas' solicitude for old age).

CANTO XIX

1-6. An hour before dawn when the last stars of Aquarius and the first of Pisces would have risen. The portions of the constellations indicated may be conceived in the form : : . . this being the figure termed *Fortuna Major* in geomancy (an occult science by which events are predicted according to points placed in certain positions). Verse 3 refers to the coldness of the earth before dawn, and of the frigid Saturn (Virgil's *Frigida Saturni . . . stella*, *Georg.* i. 336; *cf.* *Par.* xviii. 68, and xxii. 146, *notes*).

7-33, 55-63. Dante's second dream, that of the Siren (Sensual Pleasure) has reference to the three sins that remain to be purged (*v.* 59): avarice, gluttony, and lust being conceived as due to the wiles of the Siren. The "lady" of *v.* 26 probably stands for the light of reason, which unites with human wisdom (Virgil, *vv.* 28-32; *cf.* *Inf.* i. 63, *note*) in showing Dante the emptiness of sensual delights. There is a difficulty in *v.* 22: for, according to Homer, Ulysses, of course, withstood the Sirens. Dr. Moore suggests that Dante's knowledge of the episode is derived from a passage in which Cicero, commenting on Homer's Song of the Sirens, implies that Ulysses was ensnared by them (*De Finibus*, v. 18). For the rest, *cf.* *Inf.* xxvi. 73-75, and 100-142, *notes*.

49, 51. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (*Matth.* v. 4).

79. The speaker is Pope Adrian V. (see below, *note* to *v.* 97 *sqq.*).

84. This line has been much discussed. We take the "concealed" or "implied" thing, which was involved in the direct answer to the question, to be a revelation of the fact that souls are purged in as many circles as may be necessary, but that some may pass free through certain circles, if they have not been guilty of the sins purified in them. This is the first indication in the poem of this fact; but it is illustrated later on by Statius rising from the circle of the Avaricious and making his way straight through the two that are left, perhaps delaying his course somewhat for the sake of Virgil's company (*xxiv.* 8, 9), but not retarded to endure the penalties of the circles. Dante has already indicated (*xiii.* 133-138) his anticipation of the necessity of sinful souls being purged severally in the successive terraces, and Statius' confession (*xxi.* 68; *xxii.* 93) subsequently confirms it. But this is the first passage which indicates the possibility of souls passing through any circle without enduring its penalties.

97 *sqq.* Ottobuono de' Fieschi (of Genoa), who had, while Cardinal, been sent to England as Papal legate (1268), was elected Pope, as Adrian V., on July 12, 1276, and died on August 18 of the same year (*v.* 103). The Fieschi were Counts of Lavagna, and derived their title from a little river of that name, which flows into the Gulf of Genoa between Sestri Levante and Chiavari (*vv.* 100-102). The words in *v.* 99 ("Know that I was a follower of Peter") are spoken in Latin, as the official language of the Church and Popes.

Adrian's niece, Alagia (*vv.* 142-145), was the wife of Moroello III. Malaspina (for whom see above, *Canto viii.* 109-139; *note*). One of her sisters, Fiesca, married Alberto, belonging to a different branch of the Malaspina family; and the other, Jacopina, was the wife of Obizzo II. of Este.

136-138. The Sadducees, having told Jesus of a woman who had married seven brothers in succession, and asked him: "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (*Math.* xxii. 23-30; *Mark* xii. 18-25; *Luke* xx. 27-35). The passage is usually taken to refer specifically to the Pope as the spouse of the Church (*cf.* *Inf.* xix. 56, 57; *Purg.* xxiv. 22). But surely it may be taken with a wider reference. Marriage is regarded as the closest instance of special relations which have some legal or official sanction over and above the purely personal relations on which they are based, or which spring out of them. All such relations are abolished in the spirit world (*cf.* *Par.* vi. 10, and other passages).

141. The fruit of repentance (see above, v. 92).

CANTO XX

8, 10-15. The "sin" and the "ancient she-wolf" are, of course, Avarice (see *Inf.* i. 49-60; 94-101); while the deliverer anxiously alluded to in v. 15 corresponds to the *veltro* of *Inf.* i. 101-111, though the indication here is less definite than in the earlier passage—perhaps because Dante was beginning to lose hope at the time of the composition of the present canto?

13, 14. See above, Canto xvi. 67 *sqq.*

25-27. Caius Fabricius, the Roman Consul (B.C. 282) and Censor (275), refused the gifts of the Samnites on settling terms of peace with them, and, subsequently, the bribes of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, when negotiating with him concerning an exchange of friends. Virgil's words in this connection—*parvoque potentem Fabricium* (*Aen.* vi. 844) are quoted in the *De Mon.* ii. 5: 90-99; and in the *Conv.* iv. 5: 107-110, there is a further allusion to Fabricius' refusal of the bribes (here he is mentioned together with Curius Dentatus; as by Lucan, *Phars.* x. 151, who quotes the pair for their simplicity of manners and contempt of luxury—*et nomina pauperis avi Fabricios Curiosque graves*).

31-33. Nicholas (fourth century, Bishop of Myra in Lycia) saved the three daughters of a fellow-townsmen, who was in dire straits of poverty, from leading lives of shame, by secretly throwing into their window at night bags of gold, which served them as dowries and enabled them to marry (see the *Legenda Aurea* and *Brev. Rom.* ad 6 Decemb.).

40 *sqq.* The speaker is Hugh Capet, King of France (987-996); but as some of the details given by Dante can apply only to his father, Hugh the Great (Duke of the Franks, etc., and Count of Paris, d. 956), it is plain that the poet has confused these two personages. In v. 52 we find a legend very generally accredited in those days, but always referred to the father, never to the son. Verses 53-59 state that when the Carolingian dynasty came to an end (with Louis V. d. 987), the speaker's son succeeded, whereas in reality it was Hugh Capet himself who succeeded. And it was Hugh Capet who founded the Capetian dynasty (*vv.* 59, 60), not his son and successor, Robert I.

46-48. The treachery of Philip the Fair and his brother Charles of Valois towards the Count of Flanders in 1299 (Villani, viii. 32) was avenged three years later at the battle of Courtrai, in which the French were completely routed by the Flemish (Villani, viii. 55-58).

50, 51. Between the years 1060 and 1300, the French throne was occupied exclusively by four Philips (I.-IV.) and four Louis (VI.-IX.).

54. When Louis V. died in 987 without children there was only one formidable Carolingian left—Charles, Duke of Lorraine, the son of Louis IV. Hugh Capet, seeing the danger, promptly had him put into prison, where he died in 991. Dante is wrong in saying that Charles was a monk; there is probably a confusion with Childeric III., the last of the Merovingians, who was deposed in 752 and ended his days in a convent.

61. After the death of Count Raymond Berengar of Provence, Charles I. of Anjou married, in 1246, his daughter, Beatrice, who had inherited the county (see above, Canto vii. 128, and *Par.* vi. 127-142, notes).

65. Note the irony of the "for amends" thrice repeated.

66. A reference to the English chronicles and histories will show that Dante does not adhere strictly to the correct chronology in this line, and that the origin of the differences between the French and English Kings alluded to goes back to a date earlier than that of the "great dowry of Provence." However, he is right in all the essential facts, which held good, as stated by him, for many years. Thus, Villani says that Edward III., when on the point of invading France in 1346, told his barons that the French King "was wrongfully occupying Gascony, and the county of Ponthieu, which came to him [Edward] with the dowry of his mother, and that he was holding Normandy by fraud" (xii. 63).

67, 68. For Charles of Anjou's expedition to Italy, see above, Canto iii. 103-145, note; and for the battle of Tagliacozzo, in which he defeated Conradin, the last of the Swabians, see *Inf.* xxviii. 17, 18, note. On October 29, 1268, two months after his defeat, Conradin, who was in his seventeenth year, was beheaded by Charles' orders.

69. Dante here follows a popular but erroneous tradition (see Villani, ix. 218), according to which Thomas Aquinas, while proceeding to the Council of Lyons in 1274, was poisoned in the Abbey of Fossanuova, at the instigation of Charles of Anjou.

70-78. Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip the Fair, entered Florence, with some nobles and 500 horsemen (*v.* 73), on November 1, 1301, and left the city on April 4 of the following year. For the success of the Blacks over the Whites, which was solely due to the favour he treacherously (*vv.* 73, 74) showed to the former party (at the instigation of Boniface VIII., who had sent him to Florence ostensibly as "peacemaker"), see *Inf.* vi. 64-69, note, and Gardner, *pp.* 21-23. Charles was nicknamed *Senaterra*—"Lack-land" (*v.* 76), perhaps because of the ignominious failure of his expedition to Sicily in 1302, or because he was a younger son.

79-84. While Charles the Lame (see above, Canto vii. 124-129; *Par.* vi. 106-108, notes, etc.) was assisting his father, Charles I. of Anjou, in his futile attempt to recover Sicily, he was defeated by Roger di Loria, the admiral of Peter III. of Aragon, and taken prisoner (June 1284). In 1305 he married his youngest daughter, Beatrice, to Azzo VIII. of Este, who was her senior by many years. We have no record of the monetary transaction which excited Dante's wrath.

85-90. For Boniface VIII. (the cause of most of Dante's troubles, whom the poet invariably condemns, but whose death is in the present passage treated as an outrage on the Holy See) see *Inf.* vi. 69, xix. 52-57, xxvii. 70-111; *Purg.* viii. 131 (?), xxxii. 150, xxxiii. 44; *Par.* xii. 25-27, 90, xvii. 49-51, xxvii. 22-24, xxx. 146-148.

"Sciarra Colonna and William de Nogaret [the 'living thieves,' *v.* 90] in the name of Philip the Fair [the 'fleur-de-lys,' *v.* 86] seized Boniface VIII. at Anagni [the Pope's birthplace, about forty miles S.E. of Rome] and treated the old Pontiff with such barbarity that he died at Rome in a few days, October 11th, 1303" (Gardner, p. 26; see Villani, viii. 63).

91-93. Philip the Fair (who is called "later Pilate" because he delivered Boniface to his enemies, the Colonnese, even as Pilate delivered Jesus to the will of the Jews) caused the Order of the Templars to be persecuted, from the year 1307. According to Villani (viii. 92), many people held that the accusations levied against them were unjust, and prompted only by the desire to obtain their treasure.

94-96. Cf. *Par.* xxii. 16-18.

97-99 and 118-123. Hugh is answering Dante's question contained in *vv.* 35, 36 and relating to the example drawn from the life of Mary (*v.* 19 *sqq.*), among others.

103 *sqq.* According to Dr. Moore (see above, Canto xii. 25-27, *note*), the groups of the examples of vice are, on this fifth terrace, marked off by "putting *together* two or more instances from Profane and Sacred History respectively, instead of making the instances alternate."

103-105. Pygmalion, the brother of Dido, and murderer of her husband (their uncle), Sichaeus: "He, impious, and blinded with the love of gold, having taken Sichaeus by surprise, secretly assassinates him before the altar, regardless of his sister's great affection" (*Aen.* i. 350 *sqq.*).

106-108. Bacchus was so grateful to Midas, King of Phrygia, for the kindness he had shown to his friend Silenus, that he promised to grant him any request. Midas wished everything he touched to be turned to gold, but soon begged Bacchus to relieve him of this privilege, when he found that even his food changed into the precious metal. It is somewhat strange that Dante should consider this incident laughable; the only really funny thing about Midas (which, however, had nothing to do with greed of gold) being the asses' ears, that were bestowed on him by Apollo, for presuming to decide against him and in favour of Pan after a singing contest. (See Ovid, *Met.* xi. 100 *sqq.*).

109-111. At the capture of Jericho, Joshua ordered all the treasure to be consecrated to the Lord; which decree having been disregarded by Achan, he and his family were stoned and burned (*Josh.* vi. 19, and vii.).

112. After the Apostles had preached to the people, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common . . . and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Josus . . . having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet." Ananias and his wife were rebuked by Peter for their hypocrisy, and fell down dead. (See *Acts* iv. 32-37; v. 1-11.)

113. Heliodorus, the treasurer of King Seleucus, having gone with his guard to the Temple of Jerusalem, to remove the treasure, "there appeared unto them an horse with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at Heliodorus with his forefeet, and it seemed that he that sat upon the horse had complete harness of gold" (2 *Macc.* iii. 25).

115. "This Polydore unhappy Priam had formerly sent in secrecy, with a great weight of gold, to be brought up by the King of Thrace [Polymnestor], when he now began to distrust the arms of Troy, and saw the city with close siege blocked up. He, as soon as the power of the Trojans was crushed, and their fortune gone, espousing Agamemnon's interest and victorious arms, breaks every sacred bond, assassinates Polydore, and by violence possesses his gold. Cursed thirst of gold, to what dost thou not drive the hearts of men!" (*Aen.* iii. 49 *sqq.*)

116, 117. Marcus Licinius Crassus, surnamed *Dives*, the Wealthy, was triumphvir with Caesar and Pompey, n.c. 60. He was so notorious for his love of gold, that when he had been slain in a battle with the Parthians, their King, Hyrodes, had molten gold poured down his throat. Florus (*Epitome*, iii. 11) says that his head . . . *ludibrio fuit, neque indigno. Aurum enim liquidum in rictum oris infusum est, ut cujus animus arserat auri cupiditate, ejus etiam mortuum et exsangue corpus auro ureretur.*

128. See the following canto, *vv.* 40-72.

130, 132. Juno, being jealous of Jupiter's love for Latona, drove the latter from place to place, till she reached Delos, which had been a floating island, tossing about in the sea, till Jupiter made it fast in order to receive her. Here she bore him two children—Apollo and Diana—the sun and the moon (*cf. Par.* x. 67, xxii. 139, xxix. 1). See Ovid, *Mét.* vi. 189 *sqq.*

136, 140. *Gloria in excelsis Deo, pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.* ("Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.") See *Luke* ii. 8-14.

CANTO XXI

1. Dante begins his *Convito* by quoting Aristotle's words (*Metaphysics*, i. 1), that "all men naturally desire knowledge."

2, 3. See *John* iv. 7-15: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; . . . The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not . . ."

7-9. *Luke* xxiv. 13-15: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them."

10 *sqq.* This is the poet Statius, who remains with Dante till the end of the *Cantica* (see below, canto xxxiii. 134, 135). He was born at Naples about the year 50, and died there *ca.* 96. In making Statius a native of Toulouse (*v.* 89) Dante follows a common medieval error, probably due to a confusion with the poet's contemporary, Lucius Statius, the rhetorician, who really was born at Toulouse. The poet lived mostly at Rome (*v.* 89) during the reign of Vespasian (69-79), whose son, Titus, captured Jerusalem in the year 70 (*vv.* 82-84; *cf. Par.* vi. 92, 93 and vii.). The *nome* of *v.* 85 is, of course, that of poet. Statius was author of the *Thebaid* and of the *Achilleid*, a fragment (*vv.* 92, 93), which deal with the expedition of the Seven against Thebes and the Trojan war, respectively, and with which Dante was well acquainted. [The MS. of the *Silvae* was not discovered till the beginning of the 15th century]. For *v.* 68, see the following canto, *vv.* 92, 93.—"Not as yet for faith" (*v.* 86): see the following canto, *vv.* 59-91.

15. The early commentators, who probably knew best, say that the regular "countersign" consisted of the words—*Et cum spiritu tuo*, "And with thy spirit."

25-27. Clotho prepared the thread of life, which was spun by Lachesis and cut by Atropos (*cf. Inf.* xxxiii. 26; *Purg.* xxv. 79).

30. Being still chained to its body.

33. *Cf.* above, Canto xviii. 46-48.

44. A human soul (see above, Canto xvi. 85 *sqq.*).

50, 51. Iris, the daughter of Thaumasia and Electra. In classical mythology she personified the rainbow, and was represented as the messenger of the gods (*cf. Par.* xii. 10-12, xxviii. 32, 33, xxxiii. 118).

64. Compare the distinction made between the absolute and the practical will, in *Par.* iv. 100-114.

CANTO XXII

4-6. *Matt. v. 6: Beati qui [esuriunt et] sitiunt iustitiam*; "Blessed are they which do [hunger and] thirst after righteousness." The words of this Beatitude that have been placed in square brackets are reserved for the Angel of the sixth terrace (see below, Canto xxiv. 151-154).

13. Juvenal, the satirist, lived ca. 47-130; he praises Statius in the seventh Satire, v. 82 sqq.

37-42. Dante frequently misunderstood the classical Latin writers. He evidently read them with the same ease and security and the same keen appreciation but frequent misconception with which an Englishman, who has made no special study of Elizabethan English, reads Shakespeare. But if he really took Virgil's *quid non mortalia pectora cogis Auri sacra fames* (*Aen. iii. 56, 57*) to mean that a moderate, and therefore hallowed, desire for wealth ought to moderate extravagance, it constitutes a more portentous blunder in Latinity than any other that can be brought home to him. Many ingenious attempts have been made to escape this; but the only legitimate one is to suppose that Dante, while understanding the sense in which Virgil uttered the words, considered himself justified in supposing that his writings, like the Scripture, had many senses, and that for purposes of edification we must look into all the possible meanings that any passage might have apart from the context in which it occurs. [For the context of the passage in question, see above, Canto xx. 115, note]. And, as a matter of fact, this was the generally received theory in Dante's day.—Verse 42 alludes to the punishment of the Avaricious and Prodigal in Hell (see *Inf. vii. 22 sqq.*).

46. *Cf. Inf. vii. 56, 57.*

49-51. The idea of virtue being the mean between two extremes is, of course, the guiding principle of Aristotle's *Ethics*, but it does not harmonise well with the Christian scheme, which regarded many extremes that Aristotle actually or hypothetically condemned, as virtues. In the Christian scheme, for instance, there could be no excess of self-denial or of humility. In his abstract ethical sympathies, if not in his concrete instincts, Dante is far more Christian than Aristotelian, and can therefore find no room for the consistent application of the Aristotelian doctrine, which is indeed conspicuous by its absence from the *Commedia*. But here, where he finds a concrete instance which appeals to him, he takes the opportunity of expressing it as a general principle.

55-60. Jocasta, the mother, and afterwards the wife, of Oedipus, by whom she had the two sons alluded to in *Inf. xxvi. 53, 54* (see note). Virgil (here called "Singer of the country," probably in anticipation of the verses from his fourth Eclogue quoted below) is not referring to the invocation to Clio, the Muse of History, with which the *Thebaid* begins, but to the pagan theme and entirely pagan treatment of the whole poem.

63. "The Fisherman," i.e. St. Peter.

66-73. *Magnus ab integro sæculorum nascitur ordo Jam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna; Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto* (Virgil, Eclogue iv. 5-7). No one who reads Virgil's fourth Eclogue can fail to be impressed by its similarity to "Messianic" passages of the Old Testament, particularly Isaiah. It is easy to understand that it was universally accepted as a divinely inspired prophetic utterance in the Middle Ages. It seems probable that, as a matter of fact, the poem is an indirect imitation of Isaiah, for the Jews of Alexandria wrote a number of Sibylline verses; that is to say, Greek hexameters embodying their religious ideas, and largely based on Scripture, which they put into the mouths of the Sibyls. Some of these date from pre-Christian times, and Virgil may well have come across them, have been struck by them, and have combined them with features of the pagan tradition in this remarkable poem.

83. The Emperor Domitian (81-96) is accused by Eusebius and Tertullian of having cruelly persecuted the Christians; but there is no contemporary evidence of this.

88, 89. With these words Statius is generally supposed to indicate the entire *Thebaid*, not any particular episode in the poem. We have no record of Statius' conversion.

97-108. All these writers, divided into two groups, Roman and Greek respectively, are in Limbo, together with Homer (*vv.* 101-103). Verses 104 and 105 refer, of course, to Mount Parnassus and the Muses.

Terence (B.C. 195-159), Caecilius Statius (d. B.C. 168), Plautus (B.C. 254-184): comic poets; Varro (born B.C. 82): author of epics and satires (perhaps the reading should be *Vario*; in which case the reference is to Lucius Varius Rufus, author of a tragedy and epics, who lived in the Augustan Age and is mentioned by Horace, *Ars Poet.* 54, 55, together with Caecilius and Plautus); Persius (34-62): the satirist.—Euripides (B.C. 480-441), Antiphon and Agathon (*ca.* B.C. 448-400): tragic poets; Simonides (*ca.* B.C. 556-467): lyric poet.

109-114. The "people" of Statius are the people he celebrates in the *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*:—

Antigone and Ismene: daughters of Oedipus, by his mother Jocasta, and sisters of Eteocles and Polynices (see above, *vv.* 55-60, *note*); Deiphile (the mother of Diomed) and Argia (the wife of Polynices): daughters of Adrastus, King of Argos; Hypsipyle (*v.* 112; *cf. Inf.* xviii. 91-95) to whom Lycurgus had entrusted his son, Archemorus, directed the seven heroes who fought against Thebes to a fountain called Langia, and, the child having been killed by a serpent in her absence, Lycurgus would have slain her, had not her sons come to the rescue (see below, Canto xxvi. 94, 95, and *cf. Conv.* iii. 11: 165-169); for Tiresias and his daughter Manto, see *Inf.* xx. 40-45, 52 *sqq.* and 55-93, *note*; for Thetis and Deidamia, see *Inf.* xxvi. 61, 62, *note*.

118-120. It is past 10 A.M. *Cf.* above, Canto xii. *v.* 81.

131-138. Some commentators hold that because the companion tree, situated at the end of the terrace, was raised from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (see below, Canto xxiv. 116, 117), the present tree must have some connection with the tree of life (*Gen.* ii. 9). But this appears somewhat doubtful.

142-144. Dante has used this incident once already as an example of generosity (see above, Canto xiii. 28-30).

145, 146. Thomas Aquinas, in a passage recommending sobriety to women and young people, quotes the words of Valerius Maximus (II. i. 3): *Vini usus olim romanis foeminis ignotus fuit*.

146, 147. See *Dan.* i. 8, 17: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: . . . and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."

148-150. For the Golden Age, *cf. Inf.* xiv. 96, 106 and 112, and *Purg.* xxviii. 139-144. See, too, Ovid, *Mét.* i. 103 *sqq.*, whose description Dante may have had in mind.

151-154. For the locusts and honey eaten by John the Baptist, *see Matt.* iii. 4, *Mark* i. 6; and for his glory and greatness, *see Matt.* xi. 11, *Luke* vii. 28.

CANTO XXIII

11. "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise" (*Ps.* li. 15). [All the offices begin with the invocation *Domine labia mea aperies*.]

25-27. The Thessalian, Erysichthon, cut down an oak in the sacred grove of Ceres, whereupon the goddess punished him by making him endure such hunger that he was reduced to gnawing his own flesh; of which, by that time, there was

so little left that his hunger opened the yet more terrible prospect of death by starvation (Ovid, *Met.* viii. 738-878).

28-30. During the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, the famine became so terrible, that a Jewess, named Mary, killed her child and devoured it (see Josephus, *De Bello Jud.* vi. 3).

32, 33. Longfellow quotes an interesting passage from a sermon of Brother Berthold (a Franciscan friar who lived at Regensburg in the 13th century), which proves, what is indeed implied in Dante's words, that this conception was current at the time.

40 *sqq.* This is Dante's friend, Forese Donati, the brother of Corso (see the following canto, *vv.* 79-90 and of Piccarda (see the following canto, *vv.* 10, 13-15, and *Par.* iii. 34, *sqq.*, especially the *note* to v. 49). Forese, who bore the nickname of Bicci Novello, died on July 28, 1296 (*v.* 78). For his relations with Dante, which throw considerable light on the somewhat unedifying but highly interesting and important period of our poet's life that followed the death of Beatrice, see *vv.* 115-119 and *cf.* Gardner, p. 14 *sq.*

73-75. "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Math.* xxviii. 46, *Mark* xv. 34).—"This desire"—the desire to conform our will to the will of God.

79-84. "If you delayed repentance till the last moment, how is it that you are not still in the Antipurgatorio?"

85-93. In one of the sonnets referred to below (*note* to *vv.* 115-119) Dante describes Forese's neglect of his wife, Nella, but with a coarseness that is well-nigh incredible. The present passage may have been intended by the poet to atone in a measure for that poem, and to offer the widow some consolation by representing Forese, in his new condition, as one of the tenderest of husbands.

94-111. Dante compares the shamelessness of the Florentine women with that of the women in Barbagia (a mountainous district in the south of Sardinia), who are said to have been descended either from the Vandals or the Saracens. We have no contemporary record of sermons or decrees relating to this subject. A law dealing with a kindred matter—the luxury of the women—is mentioned by Villani (ix. 245) as having been passed in 1324. See *Par.* xv. 99 *sqq.*

115-119. These verses afford a clear proof that the life from which Virgil rescued Dante was not merely one of philosophical or religious error, as has been contended, but of moral unworthiness. There is still extant a poetical correspondence between Dante and Forese (consisting of three sonnets by the former and two by the latter) on a level quite beneath anything else that we possess of Dante's. The two friends rail at each other in a vein which may have been meant playfully, but is extremely stinging and anything but refined.

119, 120. See *Inf.* xx. 127-129.

127-129. See *Inf.* i. 112-126.

CANTO XXIV

10, 13-15. For Piccarda, see *Par.* iii. 34 *sqq.*

19 *sqq.* Bonagiunta Orbicciani degli Overardi, a Lucchese poet, who was still living in 1296. See below, *note* to *vv.* 52-63.

20-24. Simon de Brie was Pope, as Martin IV., from 1281 till 1285. See Villani, vii. 58 and 106; in the latter passage we learn that "he was a good man and very favourable to Holy Church and to those of the house of France, because he was from Tours." Martin died of eating too many eels from the Lake of Bolsena stewed in Vernaccia wine. His epitaph ran: *Gaudet anguillae, quia mortuus hic jacet ille Qui quasi morte reas excoriabat eas.*

28. Of Ubaldin dalla Pila, a member of the Tuscan Ghibelline family of the Ubaldini, we know that he was a glutton, and that he was brother of the Cardinal Ottaviano (*Inf.* x. 120), father of the Archbishop Roger of Pisa (*Inf.* xxxiii.), and uncle of Ugolino d'Azzo (see above, Canto xiv. 105).

28, 30. This is probably Bonifazio dei Fieschi, who was Archbishop of Ravenna (1274-1295). We have no record of his greediness.—*Rocco* refers to the ornament, shaped like a rook at chess, at the top of the ancient pastoral staff of the Archbishops of Ravenna.

31-33. Messer Marchese, of Forlì, who belonged either to the Argogliosi or to the Ordelaifi family, was Podestà of Faenza in 1296. When told that he was always drinking he retorted by saying that he was always thirsty.

37-48. A much discussed passage. A few of the early commentators, somewhat absurdly, took *gentucca* as a substantive, the pejorative of *gente*. It seems probable that Minutoli's identification is correct, and that the lady in question was Gentucca Morla, the beautiful wife of Cosciolino Fondora, of Lucca, in whose will (1317) she is mentioned. The friendship, for such it assuredly was, may be placed between the years 1314-1316, when Dante is most likely to have been at Lucca (see Gardner, p. 35). In 1300 Gentucca was still quite young and unmarried, and therefore did not yet wear the *benda* (v. 43), which was reserved for married women (and, when white, for widows, see above, Canto viii. v. 74).

51. The first line of a canzone contained in the *Vita Nuova*, § xix.

52-63. Italian lyrical poetry before 1300 may be roughly divided into three schools. (a) The Sicilian school (continued in Central Italy), which was based on Provençal traditions; to this belong Jacopo da Lentino, commonly called *il Notaio*, Bonagiunta, and Guittone of Arezzo in his first period. (b) The philosophical school, which may be represented by the later poems of Guittone and which reached its climax in the works of Guido Guinicelli of Bologna. (c) The Florentine school of the "sweet new style," the most distinguished representatives of which are Guido Gavalcanti and Dante. Their poetry is strongly influenced by that of Guido Guinicelli, but shows more genuine inspiration than any that had gone before in Italy. See above, Canto xi. vv. 77-79, *note*. [Bonagiunta wrote a poem in derision of Guido Guinicelli; and if, as seems probable, this poem induced Dante to select Bonagiunta for the purpose of making him eat humble pie in the present canto, we have another piece of evidence in favour of the theory that the two Guidos are Guittone of Arezzo and Guido Guinicelli.]

79-90. Corso Donati, Podestà of Bologna (1283, 1288) and of Pistoja (1289), and head of the Florentine Blacks, was from all accounts a very distinguished man; but he ruined himself and wrought incalculable harm to others through his ambition. When the disturbances of Florence became so unbearable, in 1300, that the heads of both factions were exiled, he went to Rome and induced Boniface to send Charles of Valois to the city as peacemaker. The latter favoured the Blacks, who exiled their enemies and acted relentlessly towards them for many years. Corso finally tried to obtain supreme authority, and being suspected of a treacherous intrigue with his father-in-law, the Ghibelline captain Uguccione della Faggiuola, he was condemned to death. He attempted to escape but was captured on the way; whereupon, rather than meet so ignominious an end, he let himself slip from his horse and was killed (October 6, 1308). See Villani, viii. 96; *cf.* *Inf.* vi. 64-69 and *Purg.* xx. 70-78.

103-117. See above, Canto xxii. 131-138, *note*.

121-123. The Centaurs (born of Ixion and a cloud in the shape of Hera), were present at the wedding of their half-brother, Pirithous, King of the Lapithae, and Hippodame. One of their number, Eurytus, heated with wine, attempted to carry off the bride, and the rest followed his example with the other women. Theseus, the friend of Pirithous, having rescued Hippodame, a general fight

ensued between the Lapithae and the Centaurs, in which the latter were vanquished (see Ovid, *Met.* xii. 210-535).

124-126. See *Judges* vii. 1-7: . . . "and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouths, were three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place."

151-154. "Blessed are they which do hunger [and thirst] after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (*Math.* v. 6). See above, Canto xxii. 4-6, *note*.

CANTO XXV

1-3. In Purgatory it is two o'clock P.M., or later. Aries being on the Purgatory meridian at noon, the succeeding sign of Taurus holds that position at 2 P.M.; while at the same time Scorpio (the sign opposite Taurus) is on the meridian of Jerusalem, where it is consequently 2 A.M.

10-12. The stork, in the "Bestiaries," is the type of obedience. It does not attempt to fly out of its nest till its mother gives it leave.

22, 23. At the birth of Meleager, son of Oeneus, King of Calydon, and Althaea, the Fates predicted he would live as long as a certain log of wood was not consumed by fire. Subsequently he slew the Calydonian boar, and gave the skin to his mistress, Atalanta. His uncles (Althaea's brothers) having taken it from her, he killed them, too; whereupon Althaea in a rage threw the log on the fire and brought about her son's death (Ovid, *Met.* viii. 445-525).

37, 38. With this passage, compare *Conv.* iv. 21: 28-48.

52, 55, 61. The three souls, vegetative, animal, and rational (*cf.* above, Canto iv. 5, 6).

64-66. Brutes have no *intellectus*. Man's intellect is "possible," *i.e.* has powers undeveloped or not in action; whereas the angelic intellect is continuously and perfectly "actualised" (*cf.* *Par.* v. 22-24; xxix. 76-81). Hence "no creature save man, either above or below him, apprehends by possible intellect" (*De Mon.* i. 3: 52-55). It follows that none of the corporal organs which are common to men and animals can be the seat of intellect. Whence "the possible intellect is called separate because it is not the act of a corporal organ" (Aquinas). For the erroneous inferences (adverse to the doctrine of personal immortality) which Averroës drew from this fact, see *Argument.* *Cf.*, too, above, Canto xviii. 51, *note*.

75. On the subject of self-consciousness there is some confusion in the writings of the schoolmen. Dante with sound insight follows Averroës in making it the special characteristic of the rational or intellectual soul, as life is of the vegetable, and sensation of the animal soul. "The action of the intellect is likened to a circle, because it turns round upon itself and understands itself" (Averroës).

79. See above, Canto xxi. 25-27, *note*.

83. *Cf.* *Par.* xxix. 72.

85-87. See *Inf.* iii. 70 *sqq.* (*e.g.* 121-129); and *Purg.* ii. 100-105.—It has been pointed out that in dealing with the two Montefeltros (*Inf.* xxvii., *Purg.* v.) Dante follows the popular ideas rendered familiar by representations in art, but not strictly reconcilable with the doctrine here laid down.

88. "Well defined around." "A thing is said to be in space by *circumscription*, when a beginning, middle, and end can be assigned to it in space, or if its

parts are measured by the parts of space; and in this sense the *body* is in space. A thing is said to be in space by *definition*, when it is here in such a sense as not to be elsewhere; and in this sense *Angels* are in space, for an Angel is where he is operative. And, according to Damascenus, this is the case also with disembodied souls. I say disembodied because the soul when united with the body is in the same place as the person in his totality. A thing is said to be in space *repletively*, because it fills space; and thus God is said to be in every place because he fills every place" (Albertus Magnus). Cf. *Purg.* xi, 2, *Par.* xiv, 30.

121-127, 129-130, 133. The hymn sung by the lustful began with the verse quoted by Dante in his day, and for some three hundred years after his time (till the Breviary was revised by Pope Urban VIII. in 1631). This may be seen by a reference to the ancient "uses," as Dr. Moore points out. The hymn is entirely appropriate to the occupants of this terrace, the third verse running—*Lumbos jecurque morbidum Flammis adure congruis, Accincti ut artus excubent Luxu remoto pessimo.*

128. "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. . . . Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (*Luke* i. 31-34).

130-132. Helice or Callisto, one of Diana's nymphs, having borne Jupiter a son (named Arcas), was dismissed by Diana and changed into a bear by Juno, who was jealous of her. In that form she was being pursued by Arcas, when Jupiter set both the mother and the son in the sky as constellations (see Ovid, *Mét.* ii. 401-530, and cf. *Par.* xxxi. 32, 33).

CANTO XXVI

16 *sqq.* The speaker is Guido Guinicelli (ca. 1230-ca. 1276; see above, *notes* to Cantos xi. 97-99 and xxiv. 52-63), a member of the Ghibelline Principi family, of Bologna. Little is known of his life, save that he was Podestà of Castelfranco in 1270, and that he was exiled in 1274, together with the Lambertazzi (cf. *Inf.* xxxii. 122, 123; *Purg.* xiv. 99, 100, *notes*); the city of his refuge and death may have been Verona. As a poet, Guido began as an imitator of the later method of Guittone d'Arezzo, but he soon outshone his model (*vv.* 124-126), and his best works (notably the famous canzone *Al cor gentil ripara sempre Amore*, which may be said to mark an epoch in Italian literature), inspired much of the poetry of the Florentine school (*vv.* 97-99). For Guido see, in addition to the references given above, *De Vulg. El.* i. 9, 15; ii. 5, 6; *Conv.* iv. 20; *Vita Nuova*, Sonnet x. v. 2 (*il Saggio*).

40 and 79. For Sodom and Gomorrah, see *Gen.* xix.

41, 42 and 86, 87. For Pasiphaë, who attained her end by entering an artificial cow, made by Daedalus, see *Inf.* xii. 12-18, *note*.

43, 44. "The Rhiplean mountains"—a general term with medieval geographers and writers, to express mountains in the north of Europe and Asia; "the sands," *i.e.* those of the African desert.

59, 60. Some hold that Dante is alluding to Beatrice (*Inf.* ii. 52 *sqq.*); others, that the reference is to the Virgin Mary (*ib.* 94 *sqq.*).

62, 63. The Empyrean; see *Par.* xxx. 39 *sqq.*

77, 78. This opprobrious epithet was given to Caesar on account of his relations with Nicomedes, King of Bithynia. See Suetonius' *Caesar* [49]; though Dante's immediate source was probably rather the *Magnae Derivationes* of Ugucione da Pisa, *s.v. triumphus*.

82-87. Their sin was indeed bi-sexual (*ermafrodito*: Hermaphroditus, having excited the love of a nymph to which he remained indifferent, she prayed that their bodies might be joined together for ever; and the gods granted her prayer

—see Ovid, *Met.* iv. 288-388], and so far natural and generically human; but inasmuch as it transgressed the specifically human law of marriage (see the preceding canto, v. 135), there was an element of brutishness in it. *Bestialità* is used by Dante in many different senses; but always as opposed to the specifically human element in man. In general terms that specifically human element is reason, and therefore *bestialità* (like the French *bêtise*) is sometimes used for “stupidity” or “want of intelligence,” as, for example, in *Conv.* iv. 14: 107. Here it implies simply a neglect of the specifically human regulations of a relation which is not specifically human in itself.

94-96. Thoas and Euneos, the sons of Hypsipyle; for the incident, *cf.* above, Canto xxii. 112, and see Statius, *Theb.* iv. 785 *sqq.*, v. 499 *sqq.*

107. Lethe, the river of forgetfulness; see below, Canto xxviii. 130, etc.

115 *sqq.* Arnaut Daniel, a distinguished Provençal poet, flourished *ca.* 1180-1200. Among his patrons was Richard Coeur-de-Lion. He was a master of the so-called *trobar clus*, or obscure style of poetry, which revelled, besides, in difficult rhymes and other complicated devices. As such, he was very naturally “caviare to the general”; and the lines in which Dante deals with the popular preference for Guiraut de Bornelli [“him of Limoges”; *ca.* 1175—*ca.* 1220; called by his contemporaries “master of the troubadours”] are easier for us to understand than his own evident bias in favour of Arnaut. For the best modern criticism not only places Guiraut well above Arnaut (whose fame is at a very low ebb), but is almost unanimous in setting him at the head of all the troubadours; his only rival, if rival he have, being Bernart de Ventadorn (whom Dante never mentions).—Verses 118, 119 mean, not that Arnaut wrote better love songs and better prose romances than any one else (for it is practically certain that he wrote no prose at all), but that he surpassed every writer in France, not only the troubadours of the South, but also the authors of the prose romances in the North [in *De Vulg. El.* 10: 12-16, Dante speaks of prose works as the special province of the *langue d’oïl*, or Northern French].—For Arnaut, *cf.* *De Vulg. El.* ii. 2, 6, 10, 13; and for Guiraut, *ib.* i. 9; ii. 2, 5, 6.

CANTO XXVII

1-5. It was sunrise at Jerusalem, midnight in Spain (where Libra, the sign opposite to Aries, would be on the meridian) and noon in India: it was, therefore, sunset at the base of the Mount of Purgatory. But there was still an interval before sunset at the height the poets had reached (*cf.* above, Canto xvii. v. 12).

6. As this angel corresponds to the angels that welcome and direct Dante at the end of his journey through each of the other circles, we must suppose that he struck the last P from Dante’s brow with his wing. It is vain, therefore, to seek for any personal confession in Dante’s statement that he had to pass through the flame. The same is true of Statius, for whose final liberation the souls of Purgatory had already sung their hymn of glory to God. The fact seems to be that this flame, in addition to being the instrument of purification on the seventh circle, does duty for the wall of fire, which, according to some representations, surrounds the Garden of Eden.

8. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (*Matth.* v. 8).

23. See *Inf.* xvii. 79 *sqq.*

37-39. While Thisbe was waiting for her lover, Pyramus, near a mulberry-tree, a lioness came up from which she fled, dropping a garment in her haste. This the beast stained with blood, having just devoured an ox. When Pyramus came up and saw it on the ground, he thought that Thisbe was dead and stabbed himself. Thisbe returned just in time to see her lover die and then slew herself too; whereupon the colour of the mulberries changed from white to red. Dante

knew the story from Ovid, *Met.* iv. 55-166, and refers here specially to vv. 145, 146: *Ad nomen Thisbes oculos jam morte gravatos Pyramus erescit, visaque recondidit illa.* See below, Canto xxxiii. 69, and cf. *De Mon.* ii. 9: 30-34.

58. The words to be spoken to the righteous at the Last Judgment: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (*Matt.* xxv. 34).

92-93. Cf. *Inf.* xxvi. 7, and *Purg.* ix. 16-18.

95. Venus is often called Cytherea by Virgil, from the island Cythera, near which she rose from the sea and where she was worshipped with special veneration. For the position of the planet Venus in Pisces (the constellation preceding Aries or dawn), see above, Canto i. 19-21, *note*.

97-108. This third and last vision of Dante's, in which Leah and Rachel, the Old Testament types of the Active and Contemplative Life (*Gen.* xxix. sqq.) appear to him, is a forecast of the positions Matilda and Beatrice will occupy in the Earthly Paradise. [It should be noted that Mr. Gardner, whose view is shared by others, holds that Matilda's "counterpart, as Rachel to Leah, is not Beatrice, as sometimes supposed, but St. Bernard, in the closing cantos of the *Paradiso*."] In the New Testament the types are represented by Martha and Mary; see *Conv.* iv. 17: 85-111: "Verily, it is to be known that we can have in this life two happinesses by following two different roads, both good and excellent, which lead to them; the one is the Active Life and the other is the Contemplative Life, which (although by the Active life one may attain, as has been said, to a good state of happiness) leads us to supreme happiness, even as the philosopher proves in the tenth book of the *Ethics*; and Christ affirms it with his own lips in the gospel of Luke, speaking to Martha, when replying to her: 'Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: Verily, one thing alone is needful,' meaning, that which thou hast in hand; and he adds: 'Mary has chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her.' And Mary, according to that which is previously written in the gospel, sitting at the feet of Christ, showed no care for the service of the house, but listened only to the words of the Saviour. For if we will explain this in the moral sense, our Lord wished to show thereby that the Contemplative Life was supremely good, although the Active Life might be good; this is evident to him who will give his mind to the words of the gospel." See, too, *Conv.* iv. 2: 156-162.

115. The "fruit" is the *summum bonum*, peace with God, as opposed to the many false ideals of men on earth. Cf. *Par.* xi. 1-15, and *Conv.* iv. 12: 138-201.

127-142. Note that Virgil's mission is over when he has brought Dante to the Earthly Paradise, which is the immediate goal of the souls in Purgatory. Some difficulty has been found in the last lines of the canto, because it is said that Virgil cannot make Dante bishop as well as king of himself; but we learn from the *De Mon.* iii. 5: 107-117, that in Dante's opinion man would not have needed the Church, as an organised institution, any more than the Empire, had he not fallen from the state of innocence. Accordingly, when he recovers that state he is absolved from the spiritual as well as from the temporal rule. The institutions of the Empire and the Church are, of course, to be distinguished from the human and divine reason, or Philosophy and Revelation, of which they ought to be guardians and exponents. The concluding chapter of the *De Mon.* shows us very clearly the distinction between the essential means of temporal and spiritual blessedness (human reason as developed by the philosophers, and Revelation as declared by the writers of Scripture) on the one hand, and the external institutions or regimens on the other, founded to check the perversity which perpetually drives mankind out of the true path thus indicated.

34-135. Compare the following canto, vv. 69 and 118 sqq.

CANTO XXVIII

11, 12. Towards the west.

19-21. The mournful notes heard in the pine-forest of Ravenna, on the Adriatic shore [Chiassi, near Ravenna,=the Classis of the Romans, who used it as a naval station and harbour; in Christian times a fortress was built there], when Aeolus, king of the winds (*Aen.* i. 52, *sqq.*), lets loose the sirocco, or S.E. wind. See Byron's *Don Juan*, iv. 105.

40. This is Matilda (see below, Canto xxxiii. 118, 119), in all probability to be taken as the type of the Active Life (*v.* 80). Historically, it is safest to identify her with Matelda, the *Grancontessa* of Tuscany (1046-1115), the supporter of Pope Gregory VII., the friend and bounteous benefactor of the Holy See and Church. Other attempts at identification have been made, some of them, notably Göschel's and Preger's, being of great ingenuity; but here, as so often, we shall do best in following the early commentators.

49-51. While gathering flowers in a lovely meadow, Proserpina was carried off by Pluto (*cf.* *Inf.* ix. 44, x. 80), in the presence of her mother and companions.

64-66. When she became enamoured of Adonis. See Ovid, *Mét.* x. 525-526: *Namque phaeetratus dum dat puer oscula matri, Inscius exstanti destrinxit arundine pectus.*

71-75. When Xerxes, King of Persia (B.C. 485-465) crossed the Hellespont (the modern Dardanelles) over a bridge of boats, to invade Greece, he had with him a host of a million soldiers; on his return, in a fishing boat, he was accompanied by a few men only [Orosius, whom Dante probably follows, points a similar moral—ii. 9 and 10]. The same strait separated Leander from his mistress Hero; in order to see her, he swam across it many times and was eventually drowned (see Ovid, *Heroid.* xviii., xix.).

80. *Delectasti me, Domine, in facula tua . . .* "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands" (*Ps.* xcii. 4).

87. See above, Canto xxi. 43 *sqq.*

102. From the Gate of Purgatory (see above, Canto ix. 76, 130, *sqq.*).

103-108. "The air also flows in a circle, because it is drawn along with the circulation of the whole" (Aristotle).—"And thus that air which exceeds the greatest altitude of the mountain flows round, but the air which is contained within the altitude of the mountains is impeded from this flow by the immovable parts of the earth" (Thomas Aquinas).

109-117. Here Dante gives a sort of supernatural-rationalistic explanation of what was in his day an accepted fact. "And the same holds with plants also, since some are produced by seed, others spontaneously by nature" (Aristotle).

121-123. For the formation of rain on earth, *cf.* above, Canto v. 109-111.

124-126. See *Genesis* ii. 4-6 and 10 *sqq.*: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. . . . And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. . . ." *Cf.* below, Canto xxxiii. *vv.* 112-114, *note*.

128. For Lethe, see *Inf.* xxxiv. 130 and *Purg.* i. 40.

130-132. It would be natural to understand this passage as asserting that the drinking of Lethe produced no effect until Eunoë had been also drunk; but we see from xxxiii. 91-99 that this is not the case. We are therefore compelled to interpret the passage more subtly. It appears, then, that the true function of

the twofold stream is to sift out evil and sinful memories from the sources of joy and gratitude with which they are often inseparably mixed up on earth. For instance, when some unkindness or neglect of our own has been the cause of revealing to us the beauty and generosity of another's character; or when the shock consequent upon some error or sin that we have committed has roused within us the powers of resistance and aspiration, or brought us into contact with some strong and helpful soul, it appears that the immediate effect of drinking Lethe is not to separate out the good and bad, but to engulf in the forgetfulness of all evil, into which it throws the soul, the memory of all incidental good that was connected with it. See below, Canto xxxiii. 91-99, *note*.

139-144. For the Golden Age, see above, Canto xxii. 148-150, *note*.

CANTO XXIX

3. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (*Ps.* xxxii. 1).

27. *Cf. Par.* xix. 48, *note*.

37-42. With this invocation to the Muses, *cf. Inf.* ii. 7-9, xxxii. 10, 11; *Purg.* i. 7-12; *Par.* i. 16, 17, ii. 9, xviii. 82-85.—Helicon was in reality a mountain in Boeotia, sacred to the Muses (from which *sprang* two fountains associated with them—Aganippe and Hippocrene). Urania—the Muse of astronomy and heavenly things.

43, 50 . . . "And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks . . . and the seven candlesticks . . . are the seven churches" (*Rev.* i. 12, 20) . . . "and there were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God" (*Rev.* iv. 5). Dante seems to have amalgamated these two passages for the purpose of his allegory. See, too, *Conv.* iv. 21: 100-112: "By the Theological way it is possible to say that, when the supreme Deity, that is God, sees his creature prepared to receive his good gift, so freely he imparts it to his creature in proportion as it is prepared to receive it. And because these gifts proceed from ineffable Love, and the Divine Love is appropriate to the Holy Spirit, therefore it is that they are called the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which, even as the Prophet Isaiah distinguishes them [*Vulgate*, xi. 2, 3], are seven, namely, Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge, Pity, and the Fear of the Lord."

47. The "proper" objects of the senses are those which are perceived by one sense only, as colour by the sight, sound by the hearing, savour by the taste; and in these, according to Aristotle, the senses cannot be deceived. "But the common objects are motion, rest, number, shape, size; for such things are not the proper objects of any sense, but are common to all," and with respect to them the senses may err.

49. Probably the apprehensive faculty (see above, Canto xviii. 22, 23, *note*).—Mr. Butler quotes *Hamlet*, i. 2: "A beast that wants discourse of reason."

51. "Hosanna," the word with which the Jews hailed Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem (*Matth.* xxi. 9; *Mark* xi. 9; *John* xii. 13); here used by the twenty-four elders (*vv.* 64, 83) preceding Christ's chariot.

73-81. The seven bands or pennons trailing behind the candlesticks may be taken as the seven sacraments, or, perhaps better, as the working of the seven gifts. The colours of the rainbow and of the moon's halo [Diana was born on the island of Delos] may have been suggested by *Rev.* iv. 3: ". . . and there was a rainbow about the throne in sight like unto an emerald."—The paces of v. 81 probably indicate the ten commandments.

83, 84. These elders represent the twenty-four books of the Old Testament (the twelve minor prophets count as one book, 1 and 2 Kings as one, so with

Samuel, Chronicles, and Ezra-Nehemiah). Their voices and their white garments (emblematical of Faith; see *Hebrews* xi.) were referred to above in *vv.* 51, 64-66; and the whole conception of them is *Rev.* iv. 4: "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." The crowns of "flower-de-luce" suggest the purity of their faith and teaching.

85, 86. "Blessed art thou among women"—the words of the angel and of Elizabeth to Mary (*Luke* i. 28, 42); here addressed either to Mary or to Beatrice.

92-105. See the description of these four beasts in *Ezek.* i. 4-14 and *Rev.* iv. 6-9. The faces of the man, lion, ox (or calf) and eagle represent Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, respectively. The green leaves indicate Hope ("Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope," 1 *Tim.* i. 1). According to Pietro di Dante the beast's six wings are the six laws—natural, Mosaic, prophetic, evangelical, Apostolic and canonical; [in *Ezekiel* we read that "every one had four wings;" while John says that "the four beasts had each of them six wings about him"]. The eyes indicate the knowledge of things past and future; [for Argus, with the hundred eyes, see below, Canto xxxii. 64-66, *note*].

106. The two wheels have been explained in many different ways, the interpretation adopted in the *Argument* being one of the most satisfactory. According to others, they indicate the Old and the New Testament; the orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans, etc., etc.

109-111. "Looking to *Pss.* xxxvi. and lvii. and comparing verses 5 and 7 of the former with 1 and 11 of the latter, it seems that we must understand them [the wings] as denoting—the one mercy, the other truth or justice. Then their position with regard to the bands will be made intelligible by a reference to *Ps.* xxxvi. 10: 'O stretch forth thy mercy over those that know thee [*scientia*], and thy justice over them that are of a right heart [*consilium*]' " (Butler).

113, 114. "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold . . . (*Song of Solomon* v. 10, 11).

115, 116. The cars used by these and all victorious Roman generals in their "triumphs."

117-120. For Phaëton see *Inf.* xvii. 106-108, *note*.

121-129. Faith (white), Hope (green), and Charity (red); *cf.* above, Canto viii. 89-93. The song of Charity leads the measure because, according to 1 *Cor.* xiii. 13: ". . . now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

130-132. For the moral or cardinal virtues, see above, Canto i. *vv.* 23-27, *note*.—Even in the *Convito* (iv. 17: 77-84), where Dante follows Aristotle (in whose system Prudence is an intellectual virtue), he feels constrained to say: "By many, Prudence, that is Wisdom, is well asserted to be a moral virtue; but Aristotle numbers that amongst the intellectual virtues, although it is the guide of the moral, and points out the way by which they are formed, and without which they cannot be." The three eyes of Prudence have reference to the past, present, and future, and the purple garb of the four virtues to the Empire (*cf.* below, Canto xxxii. *vv.* 58, 59, *note*).

134-141. These two are Luke (considered as author of the *Acts*) and Paul. Paul describes Luke (in *Col.* iv. 14) as "the beloved physician;" he is therefore regarded as a spiritual Hippocrates (this being the name of a famous Greek physician). The "creatures" of *v.* 138 of course=mankind. The explanation of Paul's sword is to be found either in his own words (*Eph.* vi. 17): ". . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" or in the circumstance that he was always represented with one (in reference to his martyrdom by sword).

142. James, Peter, John, and Jude—the authors of the four canonical epistles.

143, 144. John, considered as author of *Revelation*—a series of visions, concerning things that must shortly come to pass: hence he is represented as "rapt in fantasy and with subtle face."

45-150. We saw that the "lilies" (v. 84) were emblematic of the purity of the Old Testament; now the charity of the New Testament is indicated by the "roses and such flowers red."

CANTO XXX

1-6. The "wain of the first heaven" are the seven candlesticks, which are the spiritual guides of the righteous; even as the seven stars of the Septentrio or Ursa Minor direct the mariner making for port.

7, 8. The twenty-four elders.

10, 11. The elder representing the books of Solomon sang aloud three times the words of the *Song of Solomon* (iv. 8): "Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon."

17, 18. These are identical with the angels of vv. 29 and 82; *ad vocem tanti senis*, "at the voice of so great an elder."

19. "Blessed art thou that comest." See *Matt.* xxi. 9, *Mark* xi. 9, *Luke* xix. 38, *John* xii. 13; and cf. the preceding canto, v. 51, *note*.

21. "Oh, with full hands give lilies" (*Aen.* vi. 884).

31-33. This is Beatrice. Note the colours of Faith, Hope, and Charity. In the *Vita Nuova* [the whole of which should be read in conjunction with the present and the following canto; see, too, Gardner, pp. 8, 9, 13-15, 45-53], Beatrice appears in red and white, but never in green. The olive was sacred to Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom (v. 68).

34-48. The appearance of Beatrice has the same effect on Dante now as in the days of the *Vita Nuova* (§ ii. 19 *sqq.*, xi., xiv., 24-49, xxiv. 1-14). *Colanto tempo* (vv. 34, 35): ten years—1290-1300; see below, *note* to vv. 124, 125. Dante first met Beatrice when he was in his ninth year (v. 42), she being also eight years old, but some months younger (*Vita Nuova*, § ii.). Verse 48 is a translation of Virgil's *Agnosco veteris vestigia flammae* (*Aen.* iv. 23).

52. The beauties of the Earthly Paradise.

53. See above, Canto i. 95 *sqq.*

55, 63. The only instance in which Dante's name occurs in the *Commedia* (for in *Par.* xxvi. 104, *da te* is almost certainly the correct reading). In the *Vita Nuova*, *Conv.* and *De Mon.* he does not name himself, either; and in the *De Vulg. El.* he goes out of his way to call himself *amicus Cini* or *alius Florentinus*. The explanation of this circumstance (which would pass unnoticed with almost any other author, but which is curious in the case of so personal and subjective a writer as Dante) is to be found in the *Conv.* (i. 2), where we learn that "it appears to be unlawful for any one to speak of himself;" and that "one does not permit any rhetorician to speak of himself without a necessary cause." In his epistles, which are personal communications, not posing as literature (though they have since achieved literary fame), Dante does not follow this rule.

83, 84. See *Ps.* xxxi. 1-8: "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust . . . thou hast set my feet in a large room."

85-90. These lines describe the snow on the ridges of the Apennines, first congealed, when the winds blow from the north; and then dissolved, at the time of the warm and gentle breezes that come from Africa ("where twice a year, at noon, the sun touches the zenith of each point; so that the shadow of an opaque body, in a vertical position, falls at its base and appears nowhere" (Antonelli).

93 See *Par.* i. 76-84.

102. "Spirits." See above, Canto xviii. 49, 50, *note*; and *cf.* *Par.* vii. 5, etc.

109-111. *Cf.* *Inf.* xv. 55 *sqq.*, and *Purg.* xvi. 73 *sqq.*

112-114. *Cf.* *Par.* xx. 118-120, xxxii. 65, 66.

115. The use of the phrase *vita nuova* in this line is relied on by those who understand Dante's work which bears this title simply as a record of his "Early Life;" but it is better to reverse the argument, and take this verse to mean: "but in the new life into which love led him, had such power," etc. For though there are many cases in which *nova età* means "early life," none has been produced in which *nova vita* has that meaning, and Dante's elder contemporary, Dante da Majano, whose language evidently had a considerable influence upon Dante Alighieri, uses the phrase (in the poem which begins *Giovane donna dentro al cor mi siede*) in such a way as to leave no room for ambiguity: *Gli spiriti innamorati cui diletta Questa lor nova vita* ("the enamoured spirits, whom this new life of theirs delights").

121-123. For sixteen years, from 1274, the year in which Dante first met Beatrice, till 1290, the year of her death.

124-125. Beatrice was twenty-five years old when she died—a period that covers the first of Dante's four ages. "The first is called Adolescence, that is the growth of life. . . . Of the first no one doubts, but each wise man agrees that it lasts even to the twenty-fifth year; and up to that time our soul waits for the increase and the embellishment of the body" (*Conv.* iv. 24: 1-4, 11-15).

126-132. These lines refer to the period of Dante's life (1290-1300) which has already been touched on in connection with Forese Donati (see above, Canto xxiii.). Verses 127-129 (like *vv.* 22-30, 49-63 of the following canto) have a very personal ring, and would seem to refer not so much to the *donna gentile* of the *Vita Nuova*, § xxxvi. *sqq.* (whether allegorically or literally, and whether, in the latter capacity, she be Gemma Donati or another), as to those other, less creditable, infidelities to Beatrice's memory, of which our poet was undoubtedly guilty at this time, and to which several of his minor poems and *Purg.* xxiii. bear witness. On the other hand, *vv.* 130-132 possibly allude to Dante's temporary indifference to religion, due to his philosophical studies during this period; and may therefore be connected with the *donna gentile* of the *Vita Nuova*, who is, in the *Conv.* ii. 13, identified with Philosophy.

133-135. "In dreams." A vision of this kind, and apparently the last, is described in the *Vita Nuova*, § xli., where Dante tells how his "heart began painfully to repent of the desire by which it had so basely let itself be possessed during so many days, contrary to the constancy of reason. And then, this evil desire being quite gone from me, all my thoughts turned again unto their excellent Beatrice. And I say most truly that from that hour I thought constantly of her with the whole humbled and ashamed heart: the which became often manifest in sighs, that had among them the name of that most gracious creature, and how she departed from us."

136-141. See *Inf.* ii. 52 *sqq.*

CANTO XXXI

12. The water of Lethe (see above, Canto xxviii. *v.* 128; and *vv.* 94-102 of the present canto).

23, 29. "Good" = God; "any others" = worldly ideals.

42. Confession, by softening the Divine wrath, blunts the edge of the sword of Justice. *Cf.* above, Canto viii. *vv.* 26, 27, and the first interpretation given in the *note* to those lines.

58. It seems best not to attempt to identify the "damsel fair."

62, 63. *Cf. Prov. i. 17*, in the Vulgate: *Frustra jacitur rete ante oculos pennatorum*.

71, 72. "Our realm"—the wind blows from the north of Europe (the continent in which Italy is); "of Iarbas' land"—the south wind coming from Africa, called "Iarbas' land" from the Libyan king of that name, one of Dido's suitors (see *Aen. iv. 196*).

77. "Marvels of creation's prime," the angels; *cf. Inf. vii. 95; Purg. xi. 3*.

98. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (*Ps. li. 7*).

106. See above, Canto i. 23-27, *note*.

107, 108. It is quite natural for those who argue that Beatrice is a purely allegorical character to insist on this passage as implying her pre-existence in heaven, before her incarnation as an earthly maiden. The passage, however, does not necessarily imply this, for it is only carrying a little further the familiar language employed by Dante in the *Vita Nuova*, xxvi., lines 7 and 8 of the sonnet; *Conv. iv. 28: 5-10; Purg. xx. 68, 69; xxi. 44; Par. xxx. 114*—all indicating that the soul comes from heaven. From the assertion that the ascent to heaven at death is a *return*, it is but a very small step to describe the birth as a *descent* to the world.

116. The eyes of Beatrice are called "emeralds," not with reference to their colour, but because of their brightness.

117. *Cf. Vita Nuova, § xxi.*, the first line of the sonnet: "My lady carries love within her eyes." This idea occurs elsewhere in Dante's poems and is a commonplace with his predecessors and contemporaries.

121-126. This passage is to be taken in a purely allegorical sense. "We may read in Revelation now the divine and now the human attributes of Christ; but the human mind is incapable of combining them. As we contemplate Revelation we may see now one and now the other, but not both at once."

128-129. *Cf. the words of Wisdom in Eccles. xxiv. 21: "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty."*

138. See *vv. 55-58* of the canzone in the third book of the *Convito*, which run as follows: "Her aspect shows delight of Paradise, Seen in her eyes and in her smiling face; Love brought them there as to his dwelling-place." From Dante's commentary to the words *Dico negli occhi e nel suo dolce riso* (*ib. chap. 8*), it seems probable that "the second beauty," to which the theological virtues are now leading Dante, is the *smile* of Beatrice; the cardinal virtues having guided him to her *eyes* (see above, *vv. 106-111*).

CANTO XXXII

2. *Cf. above, Canto xxx. 121-125, notes.*

9. "[Thou art gazing on Beatrice] too fixedly."

26, 27. These lines perhaps mean that Christ guides His Church, not by force or external means, but with the spirit only.

29, 30. The right wheel; for the whole procession had turned to the right (*v. 16*).

37. "Sadly murmur" = "reproachfully murmur." See *Rom. v. 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*

38. For this tree, see *Gen. ii. 9*, and *cf. above, Canto xxii. 131-138, note.*

40-42. *Cf. the following canto, vv. 64-66.*—It seems probable that Dante's conception of the height of trees in India was derived from Virgil, *Georg. ii. 122-124*.

48. "Thus"—namely, by not allowing the spiritual and secular powers to encroach on each other.

49-51. According to legend, the cross was made of wood taken from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

52-54. In spring, when the sun is in Aries (the sign following Pisces—here called "the celestial carp").

56-60. The purple of Empire (*cf.* above, Canto xxix. 131).

63-65. The "all-seeing" Argus (*cf.* above, Canto xxix. 95) was set by Juno to watch over Io, whom she had, in a fit of jealousy, changed into a cow for yielding to Jupiter. The goddess selected Argus because he was able to keep awake longer than others ("power of vigil"), resting some of his eyes while the others were watching. The monster was lulled to sleep (and then slain) by Mercury, while listening to the god's recital of the story of the nymph Syrinx (who, when pursued by Pan, was at her prayer changed into a reed; see Ovid, *Met.* i. 568 sqq.).

66-81. The Transfiguration; see *Matt.* xvii. 1-8: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light, and, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." Jesus is called "the apple tree" in *v.* 73, according to the allegory of the *Song of Solomon* ii. 3 ("As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons").

86, 87, and 94-96. Divine Wisdom is seated at the root of the tree (Rome, the seat of the Empire); and in the shadow of "the new foliage," which blossomed forth when the Church (whose seat is at Rome, too) was united to the Empire (see above, *vv.* 49-60), she is left to guard the interests of that Church (the "chariot" of *v.* 95).

100. Mr. Butler holds that "here" "signifies 'in this world,' denoted by the Earthly Paradise;" and he quotes (from the *De Mon.* iii. 15: 45-47): *beatitudinem . . . hujus vitae, quae . . . per terrestrem Paradisum figuratur.*

109-117. The ten persecutions of the Christian Church, instigated by the Emperors, from Nero to Diocletian (64-314). For the eagle, *cf.* *Ezek.* xvii. 3; and see *Par.* xviii.-xx.

118-123. The heresies which threatened the early Church, but which were eventually suppressed by the writings of the Fathers and more violent measures. With the fox, *cf.* *Lam.* v. 18, etc.

124-129. This second descent of the eagle indicates the "donation of Constantine;" see *Par.* xx. 55-60, *note*.

130-135. The dragon, in all probability, represents the great schism wrought by Mohammed (who figures among the "sowers of discord" in *Inf.* xxviii.). Though Dante's dragon was undoubtedly suggested by the dragon of *Rev.* xii. 3, it is not necessary to assume that the two beasts have the same symbolical meaning. (The Biblical monster was in the Middle Ages identified with Satan.)

136-141. According to Mr. Butler, the fresh feathers signify "the further gifts of territory made by Pippin and Charles,"

148-147. It seems best to take these seven horned heads (which were evidently suggested by *Rev.* xvii. 3) as the seven capital sins.

148-160. The harlot (see *Rev.* xvii. 3 *sqq.* and *cf. Inf.* xix. 107 *sqq.*) represents the Papal Court in its corrupt condition under Boniface VIII. and Clement V. The giant is the French dynasty, notorious for its intrigues with the Popes; the king specially referred to being undoubtedly Philip the Fair. He it was whose bitter feud with Boniface, after pseudo-alliances for political ends (*v.* 153), was crowned by the Pope's death (*v.* 156; *cf.* above, Canto xx. 85-90, *note*); and, again, it was with Philip's connivance that Clement V. transferred the Papal See to Avignon (*vv.* 158-160; *cf. Inf.* xix. 79-87, *notes*).—Verse 155 is very difficult. It is perhaps safest to take Dante as occupying here the position he represents throughout the entire poem—that of the typical Christian.

CANTO XXXIII

1. *Ps.* lxxix., beginning: "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps."

10-12. Christ's words to his disciples: "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father" (*John* xvi. 16).

34, 35. See the preceding canto, *vv.* 130-135. Dante applies to the Church (corrupted as it was in his time) the words used by John in *Rev.* xvii. 8: "The beast thou sawest was, and is not."

35, 36. "In the olden time in Florence, if an assassin could contrive to eat a sop of bread and wine at the grave of the murdered man, within nine days after the murder, he was free from the vengeance of the family; and to prevent this they kept watch at the tomb. There is no evading the vengeance of God in this way. Such is the interpretation of this passage by all the old commentators" (Longfellow).

37. "Without an heir." In the *Conv.* iv. 3: 38-43, Dante speaks of Frederick II. (d. 1250) as "the last Emperor of the Romans (I say 'last' with respect to the present time, notwithstanding that Rudolf, and Adolphus, and Albert were elected after his death and from his descendants)."

38, 39. See the preceding canto, *vv.* 124-129, and 142-160.

40-45. Another of the so-called *Veltro* passages (*cf. Inf.* i. 101-105, *note*, and see above, Canto xx. 8, 10-15, *note*). The numbers of *v.* 43 are generally explained as DVX=leader (on the analogy of the numbers in *Rev.* xiii. 18, which indicate Nero); but surmises as to who that leader might be (whether Can Grande, or Henry of Luxemburg, or another) are entirely futile. For *vv.* 44, 45, see the preceding canto, *vv.* 150-160.

46-51. When Oedipus had solved the famous riddle of the Sphinx, Themis (renowned for her oracle) was so enraged that she sent a wild beast to work havoc among the herds and fields of the Thebans. See Ovid, *Met.* vii.—The Naiads had nothing to do with the solving of riddles; Dante followed a corrupt reading in *v.* 759 of the passage in Ovid, where Heinsius' emendation of *Laiades* (for *Naiades*) is now almost universally adopted [*Laiades*=Oedipus, the son of Laius].

57. First by Adam, then by the giant: for the wood of the chariot-pole came from the tree (see the preceding canto, *v.* 51), and the chariot was dragged away by the giant (*ib. vv.* 157-160).

61-63. Dante follows the chronology of Eusebius, according to which Adam was on earth for 930 years, and in Limbo for 4302 years, making 5232 years in all, *Cf. Par.* xxvi. 118-120. With *v.* 63 *cf. Par.* vii. 25 *sqq.*

64-66. See the preceding canto, *vv.* 40-42. The height probably indicates the vast extent and might of the Empire; while the widening towards the summit may be compared with *v.* 135 of Canto xxii., and taken to denote the inviolability of the Empire, as desired by God.

67-69. These lines are glossed by *vv.* 73-75. The Elsa is a Tuscan river, whose water has, in certain portions of its course, the property of turning objects to stone: and the hues of the mulberry (pure white changed to guilty red) are explained in the *note* to Canto xxvii. *vv.* 37-39.

78, 79. "As," namely, to show that thou hast been in the Earthly Paradise. Cf. *Vita Nuova*, § xl. 44-46: "They are called Palmers who go beyond the seas eastward, whence often they bring palm-branches."

85-90. Great stress is very naturally laid upon this passage by Witte and his followers, who maintained that Dante's sin consisted, primarily at any rate, not in moral but in philosophical aberrations. They understand Beatrice to reproach Dante with having followed Philosophy instead of Religion, and, on his declaring that he had no recollection of any such thing, to answer that it is because he has drunk of Lethe and forgotten all evil actions. But the passage cannot really be cited to support this view. The school that Dante has followed just before coming to Beatrice, and which has so imperfectly prepared him to understand her, is the school of Virgil (see above, Canto xxi. *v.* 33). And it is impossible to suppose that Beatrice reproaches Dante for having followed Virgil, who was her own emissary. He was the initial instrument of Dante's salvation from his error, not the seducer who led him into it.

We must apparently suppose that when Dante drank of Lethe, he forgot his fall and all the steps that led to his recovery from it, which required for their understanding a conscious reference to it. Therefore, when Beatrice speaks of the inadequacy (not the perversity) of the training he has had as yet, he misunderstands the reference as an implication that he had wandered from her to some other school. Beatrice takes him up on his own ground, and replies that, for the matter of that, so he did desert her, and guiltily too, else he would not have forgotten it.

When Dante has further drunk of Eunoë, he will remember all the incidental good of Virgil's faithful love and guidance; but it will no longer be painfully associated with his own sin; and that sin he will remember again, but as an external thing that does not now belong to his own personality. It will dwell in his mind merely as the outward occasion of the love manifested and the blessings secured to him. Cf. *Par.* ix. 103-105; and see above, Canto xxviii. *vv.* 130-132, *note*.

100-111. At the edge of the forest, whose shadow resembled the shadow cast by the trees at the foot of the Alps on to the streams below.

112-114. Dante was probably thinking not of *Gen.* ii. 14, but of Boëthius' verses (*De Cons. Phil.* v. metr. i.): *Tigris et Euphrates uno se fonte resolvunt, Et mox abjunctis dissociantur aquis.*

121, 122. See above, Canto xxviii. *vv.* 85 *sqq.*

H. O.

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

UCLA 62-2-1-11

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 001 223 913 3

U